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ESSAYS

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IN

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BY

THE RIGHT HON.

SIR JAMES STEPHEN, K.C.B.

FOURTH EDITION

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# P R E F A C E

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

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OF the various criticisms on the original edition of this Book which have reached me, there is one only to which, on republishing it, I think it necessary to refer. This is the commendation which has been bestowed on me of having exhibited extensive research and learning in some of the earlier of these Essays. It is a praise which I am bound and anxious to disclaim. To the utmost of my leisure and opportunities I have, indeed, drawn what I have written from the original authorities. But when leisure and opportunity for the examination of them failed me, I was contented to employ the best secondary sources, collated as carefully as was in my power. For I wrote these papers not as an essayist but as a reviewer, seeking only to meet an ephemeral demand and to gain an ephemeral attention. I have already explained how it happened that this original design gave place to what may appear a more ambitious project. But it is totally foreign to that ambition to win for these volumes any applause to which they are not justly entitled.

J. S.

CAMBRIDGE, Oct. 1850.





# P R E F A C E

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

---

I HAD destined my contributions to the Edinburgh Review to that early forgetfulness which, with a very few remarkable exceptions, attends and befits the whole mass of the periodical literature of our age. But it has seemed good to certain American booksellers to publish, with my name, repeated editions of a series of those contributions. I am thus an author in my own despite.

In these circumstances I have had to make my choice between publishing an enlarged and corrected edition of those papers, or continuing to appear, to such persons in the United States as are readers of such books, the author of a volume replete with defects and errors. Some of those faults are the result of the mere want of learning and ability to do better ; and are therefore incorrigible. But some of them are the result of the haste with which our periodical works are got up by most of the writers of them, and especially by those who, like myself have been compelled to write in the very scanty leisure of a life of almost ceaseless labour. Such faults are corrigible ; and I trust that, in the following volumes, they are corrected. I am thus an author in my own defence.

I prefix these few words to these volumes, not to deprecate criticism, which is always a vain and is not always a sincere attempt, but in order to explain that such censures as may justly be due to what I have written, have not been provoked by any inordinate solicitude of mine to appear before the world in my own person as the writer of a book, nor by any wish to assume to myself the character of a teacher on the sacred topics to which so large a part of this book is devoted.

J. S.

RICHMOND-ON-THAMES,  
May 1849.



# C O N T E N T S

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- I. HILDEBRAND - - - - - Pp. 1—57  
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*Gregoire VII., St. François d'Assise, St. Thomas d'Aquin.* Par E. J.  
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*ROOTHMEN, Præpositi Generalis Societatis Jesu, Literæ Eneyclicæ ad*  
*Patres et Fratres ejusdem Societatis, de Spiritualium Exercitiorum. S.*  
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*Arnauld. (Reuchlin, History of Port Royal. The Struggle of the Re-*  
*formed and the Jesuitical Catholicism. 1st vol. to the death of Angelique*  
*Arnauld.)* 8vo. Leipsic, 1839.

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- XII. THE EPILOGUE - - - - - 632—661  
 Now first published.



BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE  
OF  
SIR JAMES STEPHEN.

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As the connection of the author of these Essays with public affairs though important was not conspicuous, it would be impertinent to assume that any detailed account of him would be interesting to the world at large. This preface has been written solely from an apprehension that in the absence of a very short statement of the principal events of his life, the readers of his works might form a false estimate of them. They cannot be criticised with justice if the circumstances under which they were written are forgotten or unknown.

Sir James Stephen was the third son of the late James Stephen, Esq., well known in the early part of the present century as one of the most prominent opponents of the slave trade and slavery, and one of the most conspicuous members of the well-known society described in the Essay, contained in the present volume, entitled "The Evangelical Succession." He was born at Lambeth, on the 3rd January, 1789, and completed his education at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he took the degree of LL.B., in the year 1812. Having kept his terms at Lincoln's Inn during his residence at Cambridge, he was called to the bar in 1813, and was shortly afterwards appointed by Lord Bathurst to be legal adviser to the Colonial Office. This was the origin of his long connection with the public service.

In the course of the eleven years during which Sir James Stephen pursued his profession, he obtained a considerable share of business at the equity bar, and would probably have risen to high professional distinction if his health and his inclination had been

such as to induce him to devote himself exclusively to that object. This, however, was not the case. His taste for his profession was not equal to his success in it, and he was greatly impeded in pursuing it by a very severe illness, and by a weakness of eye-sight, which for many years limited his exertions. For these reasons he retired from the bar in the year 1824, accepting the office of Counsel to the Board of Trade, which he held together with that of legal adviser to the Colonial Office. In 1834 he was appointed Assistant Under-Secretary to the Colonial Office, and in 1836, on the resignation of Mr. Hay, he was appointed Under-Secretary of State. He filled this position till the year 1847, when he was forced by illness to resign it. In the summer of 1849 he was appointed Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge, and he held this office till his death, which took place at Coblenz, on the 14th September, 1859. He was also Professor of Modern History and Political Economy at Haileybury from the beginning of 1855 till the college was finally closed at the end of 1857.

The Essays contained in this volume were (with the exception of the concluding one) originally contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*; and all the rest, except the account of the Benedictines, were written whilst their author was Under-Secretary of State. Considerable additions were made to them when they were first published in a collective form in 1849. It would be improper to criticise them here, but it should be remembered by any one who draws inferences from them as to the powers of their author, that their composition was his occasional amusement and relaxation from pursuits of a more engrossing and laborious kind. A few observations on the nature of those pursuits will set this in a clear light.

The position which Sir James Stephen occupied in the Colonial Office was a very singular one. The British colonies are a collection of many separate states, of every degree of importance, from nations like Canada and New South Wales down to the rock of Heligoland, inhabited by a few Germans. The authority of the Crown over these dependencies differs in its origin, its extent, and its limitations. It has to be applied to very different objects, and to populations differing not merely in race, in religion,

in law, and in language; but in all the other respects by which the Cingalese, the Caffres, the New Zealanders, and the Hottentots are distinguished from the English settlers of Canada and Australia, the Dutch Boors at the Cape, the French of the Mauritius, and the mongrel populations of Malta, Gibraltar, and the Ionian Islands. In some of these communities the Crown exercises, through the Secretary of State for the Colonies, powers of the most extensive kind; others, as Canada and New South Wales, are independent in all but name; and others are, or during Sir James Stephen's tenure of office were, mere infant settlements, dependent, to a great extent, on the central government for the very simplest elements of civil society. To know exactly what were the powers and what the rights of the English government in respect of each of these communities, to know the history of all the relations between the United Kingdom and each of its dependencies, and to be able to give an account of the state of parties and local politics in every one of them, was one part of what was required of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. There was hardly any kind of political question upon which he was not bound to be able to advise the parliamentary head of the department when the occasion arose, for the successive Secretaries of State of necessity laboured under a deficiency of special knowledge which it was his duty to be prepared to supply.

It was also his duty to prepare the drafts of almost all the more important despatches, and of the numerous Acts of Parliament which were required by every colony in turn. Upon subjects which were but little understood by the public at large, and which excited but little general interest, this task was often hardly distinguishable from that of government and legislation, and it would perhaps be difficult to mention any man of his generation who could claim the title of a legislator with more justice than Sir James Stephen.

The understanding upon which the permanent offices in the civil service of the Crown are held is, that those who accept them shall give up all claim to personal reputation on the one hand, and shall be shielded from personal responsibility on the other. Though Sir James Stephen was at one time the object of the most bitter personal attacks (often for measures to which he had opposed all the resistance in his power,) he never complained of this compact, and

his family have no wish to claim for him a reputation which he never had a thought of claiming for himself. It matters little now what share he individually took in the great questions which during his tenure of office arose between the United Kingdom and the colonies. Praise or blame can neither affect him nor change the opinion which those who knew him best entertained of him; but without attempting to lift the veil with which official life must of necessity cover those who enter upon it, it may be said that it fell to his lot to assist in two of the most remarkable transactions even of this century. The first was the abolition of slavery, the second was the establishment of responsible government in Canada. With each of these, and indeed with all other public transactions with which he was concerned, he was connected in the same way. He prepared the measures which others advocated, and furnished many of the arguments and much of the information which they employed. He had, in addition to this, the wearisome and laborious task of superintending the detailed application of the principles which the legislature had established. This was generally a very tedious and most unpleasant process. The controversies which arose with the provincial legislatures of the various West Indian Islands in relation to the arrangements required by the abolition of slavery were as bitter as they were obscure; and the relations between this country and Canada were confused and entangled in every possible way by personal and party questions at home, and by the violent dissensions which existed in Canada itself. The difficulty of the transaction of all this business was aggravated by the fact that though great weight was attached to Sir James Stephen's opinion and advice by his official superiors, and though he held strong opinions of his own upon the subjects which came before him, he had no real authority whatever. The principles which he always advocated ultimately obtained complete recognition and success, but he was constantly obliged to take part in measures which he regretted, and of which he disapproved.

It will be readily perceived that such occupations as these involved great labour, great anxiety, and occasionally severe mortification. A single instance of the exertions which he was occasionally called upon to make may be mentioned here. The preparation of the bill for the abolition of slavery had, from various causes,



been deferred till the last moment. Sir James Stephen received notice on a Saturday morning to prepare the draft of the bill in time to enable the present Lord Derby to lay it before Parliament early in the following week. He immediately went home, and between Saturday afternoon and the middle of the day on Monday completed the task. The act (3 & 4 Will. IV. c. 73) contains sixty-six sections, fills twenty-six pages in the 8vo edition of the Statute Book, and creates a whole scheme of the most intricate and elaborate kind. This exertion seriously affected his health for many months. It was perhaps the most arduous task of the kind that he ever had to discharge, but it was only one of a series.\*

The composition of the Essays contained in the present Volume was almost the only relaxation which their Author enjoyed for many years. He used to write them early in the morning and late at night, or during the occasional holidays which his official occupations afforded. These holidays were, however, very uncommon. For many years he never left London for a month together, and though this was not the case during the last five years of his official life, he transacted business during the summer in the country with exactly the same regularity as in London. It may, therefore, be

\* The author of this sketch, distrusting his own recollection of his father's account of this, and wishing to obtain independent evidence on the subject, applied to his father's valued friend, Mr. Halksworth, the present librarian of the Colonial Office, upon the subject, and received from him an answer containing the following passage:—"I am sorry that it is not in my power to afford you any information touching your father's labours in preparing the Slavery Abolition Bill. The late Mr. Joseph was his amanuensis at that time, and it was with his pen, not mine, that the draft was written. I have often heard Joseph speak on the matter of the original draft being prepared in the short space of time you mention. He used to tell the story not as an example of your father's mental labours, but of his own physical exertions as his amanuensis.

"In my time it was no unusual thing for your father to dictate before breakfast as much matter as would fill thirty sides of office folio paper, equal to about ten pages of the Edinburgh Review. With a subject that pleased him I don't think he ever knew what it was to feel tired. The words came from his lips in one continuous stream, checked only by the inability of the writer sometimes to keep pace with him. Whatever the subject might be one soon became interested in it, and (speaking for myself) I can say that at the longest sitting I never discovered that I was wearied until I arose from my table, and the task was ended."

It should perhaps be added, that this was the only instance in which Sir James Stephen ever transacted official business on a Sunday, except once, when he passed the same day of the week in writing despatches about the Caffre War.

fairly said that the Essays must not be supposed to give the full measure of the powers of their Author. They merely show the amount of literary exertion of which he was capable, whilst the powers of his mind were principally directed to other pursuits.

A similar observation may be made on the Lectures on the History of France, which were delivered at Cambridge in the summer of 1850 and 1851. They were written under the greatest disadvantages. Sir James Stephen was appointed Professor of Modern History in the summer of 1849. He was prevented by bad health from beginning his Lectures till the autumn. Most of the Lectures which form the first of the two Volumes were written between September, 1849, and April, 1850, and they were delivered during the months of April and May. In the summer of 1850 Sir James Stephen had a most severe and dangerous illness, which threatened at one time to assume the form of a brain fever. His physician ordered him to pass the winter in travelling abroad, and, above all things, to abstain from mental labour. He accordingly left England with the intention of visiting Italy, but finding himself stronger than he expected on his arrival at Paris, he passed the rest of the winter there, and during his stay completed the greater part of the second volume of the Lectures, and delivered them at Cambridge in the following summer. The first edition of them was published in 1852.

These facts have been mentioned in order to enable those who take an interest in the matter to form an opinion on the evidence which Sir James Stephen's works supply as to his general capacity. Their object would be entirely mistaken if they were supposed to put forward any claim for posthumous fame on the part of a man whose pursuits withdrew him from the public eye, and who wished for nothing more ardently than for the privacy he enjoyed. There are men who do not understand success in life to include of necessity any very brilliant or general reputation either amongst their contemporaries or their successors. To such persons the opportunity of exerting their powers vigorously, and in a worthy direction, is its own reward, and the opinion which may be formed by others of the result of their exertions is only valuable in so far as it proceeds upon adequate information as to their character and extent. Judged by this, which in his case was the true standard, Sir James

Stephen was a happy and successful man. His life was passed in pursuits which taxed his powers to the utmost, and the manner in which he discharged the duties assigned to him obtained the approbation, and in many instances the warm and generous recognition, of those who were best entitled to have an opinion on the subject. On his retirement from office he had the honour of being made, without any solicitation on his own part, a member of the Privy Council and a Knight of the Bath, whilst both Lord John Russell and the late Sir Robert Peel bore the strongest testimony in the House of Commons to the importance of his public services. Such evidence proves that he did his duty to the public fully and faithfully, and this is the only fact respecting him of which his family wish to publish the proof. It was not the least of the many instances of his prosperity that the retirement in which the busiest part of his life was passed to a great extent protected him, and will no doubt effectually protect his memory against unjust censure and ignorant praise.

Of Sir James Stephen's private life and personal character nothing is said here, as these are matters with which the public has no concern, and on which the evidence of his son would not be impartial.

JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN.

5, Fig-Tree Court, Temple,  
July 16, 1860.

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# ESSAYS

## IN

### ECCLESIASTICAL BIOGRAPHY

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#### HILDEBRAND.

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HE had been a shrewd, if not a very reverent, observer of human life, who bowed to the fallen statue of Jupiter, by way of bespeaking the favour of the god in the event of his being again lifted on his pedestal. Hildebrand, the very impersonation of Papal arrogance and of Spiritual Despotism (such had long been his historical character), is once more raised up for the homage of the faithful. Dr. Arnold vindicates his memory. M. Guizot hails him as the Czar Peter of the Church. Mr. Voight, a professor at Halle, celebrates him as the foremost and the most faultless of heroes. Mr. Bowden, an Oxford Catholic, reproduces the substance of Mr. Voight's eulogy, though without the fire which warms, or the light which irradiates, the pages of his guide. M. Delécluze, and the *Bibliothèque Universelle de Genève*, are elevated by the theme into the region where rhetoric and poetry are conterminous; while M. l'Abbé Jager absolutely shouts with exultation to witness the subsidence, at the voice of Protestants, of those mists which had so long obscured the glory of him by whom the pontifical tiara was exalted far above the crowns of every earthly potentate. Wholly inadequate as are our necessary limits to the completion of such an enquiry, we would fain explore the grounds of this revived worship, and judge how far it may be reasonable to join in offering incense at the shrine of this reinstated *Jupiter ecclesiasticus*.

Except in the annals of Eastern despotisms, no parallel can be found for the disasters of the Papacy during the century and a

half which followed the extinction of the Carlovingian dynasty. Of the twenty-four popes who, during that period, ascended the apostolic throne, two were murdered, five were driven into exile, four were deposed, and three resigned their hazardous dignity. Some of these Vicars of Christ were raised to that awful pre-eminence by arms, and some by money. Two received it from the hands of princely courtesans. One was self-appointed. A well-filled purse purchased one papal abdication; the promise of a fair bride another. One of those holy fathers pillaged the treasury, fled with the spoil, returned to Rome, ejected his substitute, and mutilated him in a manner too revolting for description. In one page of this dismal history, we read of the disinterred corpse of a former Pope brought before his successor to receive a retrospective sentence of deposition; and in the next we find the judge himself undergoing the same posthumous condemnation, though without the same filthy ceremonial. Of these heirs of St. Peter, one entered on his infallibility in his eighteenth year, and one before he had seen his twelfth summer. One, again, took to himself a coadjutor, that he might command in person such legions as Rome then sent into the field. Another, Judas-like, agreed for certain pieces of silver to recognise the Patriarch of Constantinople as universal bishop. All sacred things had become venal. Crime and debauchery held revel in the Vatican; while the afflicted Church, wedded at once to three husbands, (such was the language of the times,) witnessed the celebration of as many rival masses in the metropolis of Christendom. It would be heretical to say that the gates of hell had prevailed against the seat and centre of Catholicism; but Baronius himself might be cited to prove that they had rolled back on their infernal hinges, to send forth malignant spirits commissioned to empty on her devoted head the vials of bitterness and wrath.

How, from this hotbed of corruption, the seeds of a new and prolific life derived their vegetative power, and how, in an age in which the Papacy was surrendered to the scorn and hatred of mankind, the independence of the Holy See on the Imperial Crown became first a practical truth, and then a hallowed theory, are problems over which we may not now linger. Suffice it to say, that in the middle of the eleventh century, Europe once more looked to Rome as the pillar and the ground of the truth; while Rome herself looked forth on a long chain of stately monasteries, rising like distant bulwarks of her power in every land which owned her spiritual rule.

Of these, Clugni was the foremost in numbers, wealth, and piety, and at Clugni, towards the end of the year 1048, Bruno, the



Bishop of Toul, arrayed in all the splendour, and attended by the retinue, of a Pontiff elect, demanded at once the hospitality and the homage of the monks. At the nomination of the Emperor Henry the Third, and in a German synod, he had recently been elected to the vacant Papacy, and was now on his way to Rome, to take possession of the Chair of Peter. Hildebrand, the Prior of Clugni, was distinguished above all his brethren by the holiness of his life, the severity of his self-discipline, and by that ardent zeal to obey which indicates the desire and the ability to command. He was then in the prime of manhood, and his countenance (if his extant portraits may be trusted) announced him as one of those who are born to direct and subjugate the wills of ordinary men. Such a conquest he achieved over him on whose brows the triple crown was then impending. An election made beyond the precincts of the Holy City, and at the bidding of a secular power, was regarded by Hildebrand as a profane title to the seat once occupied by the Prince of the Apostles. At his instance, Bruno laid aside the vestments, the insignia, and the titles of the pontificate; and pursuing his way in the humble garb of a pilgrim to the tomb of Peter, entered Rome with bare feet, and a lowly aspect, and with no attendant (or none discernible by human sense) except the adviser of this politic self-abasement. To Bruno himself indeed was revealed the presence of an angelic choir, who chanted in celestial harmonies the return of peace to the long-afflicted people of Christ. Acclamations less seraphic, but of less doubtful reality from the Roman clergy and populace, rewarded this acknowledgment of their electoral privileges, and conferred on Leo the Ninth (as he was thenceforth designated) a new, and, as he judged, a better title to the supreme government of the Church.

The reward of the service thus rendered by Hildebrand was prompt and munificent. He was raised to the rank of a Cardinal, and received the offices of sub-deacon of Rome, and superintendent of the church and convent of St. Paul.

The Pope and the Cardinal were not less assiduous to soothe, than they had been daring to provoke, the resentment of the Emperor. Bruno became once more a courtier and a pilgrim, while Hildebrand remained in Rome to govern the city and the church. The Pontiff thrice visited the German court, bringing with him papal benedictions to Henry, and papal censures on Henry's rebellious vassals. So grateful and so effective was the aid thus rendered to the monarch, that on his last return to Italy, Leo was permitted to conduct thither a body of Imperial troops, to expel the Norman invaders of the papal territory. At Civitella, however, the axes of Humphrey and Robert, brothers of William of



the Iron-hand, prevailed over the sword and the anathemas of Peter. Whether Hildebrand bore a lance in that bloody field, is debated by his biographers. But no one disputes that he more than divided the fruits of it with the conquerors. To them were conceded the three great fiefs of Calabria, Apulia, and Sicily. To the Holy See was assigned the suzerainté over them. Humiliated and broken-hearted by his defeat, Bruno pined away and died. Strong in this new feudal dominion, and in the allegiance of these warlike vassals, Hildebrand directed his prescient gaze to the distant conflicts and the coming glories in which these Norman liegemen were to minister to his vast designs. The auspicious hour was not yet come. His self-command tranquilly abided the approach of it.

Gebhard, Bishop of Eichstadt, enjoyed the unbounded confidence and affection of Henry. He had ever lent the weight of his personal advice, and the sanction of his episcopal authority, to sustain his friend and master in his opposition to papal encroachments. Yet Gebhard was selected by the discerning Cardinal, as of all men the best qualified to succeed to the vacant Papacy. Hildebrand represented to the Emperor that the choice had been made from an anxious respect for his feelings, and with a loyal desire to promote his interest and his honour. The thoughtful German perceived the net spread for him by the wily Italian. He struggled to avoid it, but in vain. He suggested many other candidates; but Hildebrand had some conclusive objection to each of them. He urged that Gebhard had been raised, by the favour of Henry himself, to an eminence unassailable by reproach, and beyond the reach of suspicion, and that no other man could boast an equal or a similar advantage. Importuned and flattered, his affections moved but his understanding unconvinced, the emperor at length yielded. If our own second Henry had studied this passage of history, the darkest page of his own had perhaps never been written.

Gebhard became Pope, assumed the title of Victor the Second, adopted, even to exaggeration, the anti-imperial principles of Hildebrand, and rewarded his services by a commission to act as his Legate *a latere* in the kingdom of France. By Victor, this high employment was probably designed as an honourable exile for a patron to whom he had contracted so oppressive a debt of gratitude. But the new Legate was not a man on whom any dignity could fall as a mere unfruitful embellishment. He cited before him the bishops and ecclesiastical dignitaries subjected to his legantine power, and preferred against the whole body one comprehensive charge of simony. Of the accused, one alone stoutly

maintained his innocence. 'Believest thou,' exclaimed the judge, 'that there are three persons of one substance?' 'I do.' 'Then repeat the doxology.' The task was successfully accomplished, until the prelate reached the name of Him whose gift Simon Magus had desired to purchase. That name he could not utter. The culprit cast himself at the Legate's feet, confessed his guilt, and was deposed. More than eighty of his brethren immediately made the same acknowledgment. The rumour spread on every side, that the papal emissary was gifted with a preternatural skill to discern the presence in the human heart of any thoughts of Satanic origin. Popular applause followed the steps of the stern disciplinarian; and the wonder of the ignorant was soon rivalled by the admiration of the learned and the great. Such was the fame of his wisdom, that the claim of Ferdinand of Castile to bear the title of Emperor of Spain, was referred to his arbitrament by the Spanish and the German sovereigns. He decided that the imperial name and dignity belonged to Henry and to his heirs, to the exclusion of every other Potentate. Ill had Henry divined the future! Rashly had he consented to hold the honours of his crown by the judicial sentence of a man, who, within twenty years, was to pluck that crown, with every mark of infamy, from the brows of his only son and successor!

When that son ascended the throne of his progenitors, and assumed the kingly title of Henry the Fourth, he was yet a child. Agnes, his widowed mother, became the regent of his dominions, and Victor the guardian of his person. But the Pope soon followed the deceased Emperor to the grave, and another election placed the vacant tiara on the head of Frederick of Lorraine.

Frederick was the brother of Godfrey, who, in right of his wife Beatrice, and during the minority of her daughter Matilda, exercised the authority and enjoyed the title of Duke of Tuscany. His promotion to the Papacy cemented the alliance between the Holy See and the most powerful of those Italian states by which the northern frontier of the papal territories might be either defended or assailed. The choice was, in appearance, the unpremeditated result of a popular tumult. Frederick seemed to be borne to the apostolic throne by the acclamations of a Roman mob, and to be seated there in a half-reluctant acquiescence in their good pleasure. Some excuse was necessary for so flagrant a disregard of the rights of the infant Emperor, and the turbulent enthusiasm of the people was at least a specious apology. But by what informing spirit the rude mass had been agitated, was sufficiently disclosed by the first act of the new Pontiff. He had scarcely assumed the title of Stephen the Ninth, before he conferred on Hildebrand the dignities

of Cardinal-Archdeacon of Rome, and of Legate at the Imperial Court.

After a reign of eight months, Stephen, conscious of the approach of death, left to the Romans his last injunction to postpone the choice of his successor until the return from Germany of this great dispenser of ecclesiastical promotions. The command was obeyed. The Cardinal-Archdeacon reappeared, bringing with him the consent of the Empress-Regent to the choice of Gerard, Bishop of Florence, another adherent of the ducal house of Tuscany. Gerard accordingly ascended the chair of St. Peter. Like each of his three immediate predecessors, he sat there at the nomination of Hildebrand, and, like each of them, he called, or permitted, his patron to become the one great minister of his reign and director of his measures. At the instance of Hildebrand, Nicholas the Second (so was he now called) summoned a council at which was first effected, in the year 1059, a revolution, the principle of which, at the distance of eight centuries, still flourishes in unimpaired vitality. It, for the first time, conferred on the College of Cardinals the exclusive right of voting at papal elections. It set aside not only the acknowledged rights of the Emperor to confirm, but the still more ancient privilege of the Roman clergy and people to nominate their bishop. For Hildebrand was now strong enough in his Norman alliance to defy that popular power before which so many churchmen had trembled. At his summons Robert Guiscard broke down the fortresses of the Roman counts and barons, who, with their retainers, had been accustomed, in the comitia of papal Rome, to rival the exploits of Clodius and his gladiators. Their authority was subverted for ever, and from that period their name ceases to appear in the history of pontifical elections. The title of Duke, and a recognition of his sovereignty over all the conquests which he had made, or should ever make, rewarded the obedience of the Norman freebooter.

After rendering this service to the cause of sacerdotal independence, Nicholas died. It was a cause which, however much advanced by the profound sagacity and promptitude of Hildebrand, could never finally triumph over its powerful antagonists by any means less hazardous, or less costly, than that of open and protracted war. During the minority of Henry such a conflict could hardly be commenced, still less brought to a decisive issue. The rights of the royal child derived from his very weakness a sanctity in the hearts, and a safeguard in the arms, of his loyal German subjects. The time of mortal struggle was not yet come. The aspiring Cardinal judged that by again resigning to another the nominal conduct, he could best secure to himself the real guidance, of that impending controversy.

To obtain from the Empress-Regent an assent to the observance by the Sacred College of the new electoral law, was the first object of the conclave which assembled after the death of Nicholas, at the command of Hildebrand. At his instance an envoy was despatched to the Imperial Court, with the offer that the choice should fall on any ecclesiastic whom Agnes might nominate, if she would consent that the Cardinals alone should appear and vote at the ceremonial. The compromise was indignantly rejected. A synod of imperialist prelates was convened at Basil, and by them Cado-lous, Bishop of Parma, (the titular Honorius the Second,) was elevated to the vacant Papacy. To this defiance Hildebrand and his brother Cardinals answered by the choice of Anselm, Bishop of Lucca, afterwards known in history as Alexander, the second of that name. After a brief but sanguinary conflict in the open field, each of the rival Popes, at the mediation of Godfrey, retired from Rome to his diocese, there to await the judgment of a future council on their pretensions. But Alexander did not quit the city until he had acknowledged and rewarded the services of the head and leader of his cause. Hildebrand now received the office of Chancellor of the Holy See, the best and the highest recompense which he could earn by raising others to supreme ecclesiastical dominion. Two successive councils confirmed the election of Alexander, who continued, during twelve years, to rule the Church with dignity, if not in peace.

The time had at length arrived when Hildebrand was to receive the high and hazardous reward which his unfaltering hopes had so long contemplated, and his self-controlling policy so often declined. Leo, Victor, Stephen, Nicholas, and Alexander, had each been indebted to his authority for the pontificate, and to his councils for the policy with which it had been administered. Successively Cardinal-Deacon, Archdeacon, Legate, and Chancellor of the Apostolic See, one height alone was yet to be scaled. In the great church of the Lateran, the corpse of Alexander was extended on the bier. A solemn requiem commended to the Supreme Judge the soul of the departed, when the plaintive strain was broken by a shout, which, rising, as it seemed, spontaneously and without concert from every part of the crowded edifice, proclaimed that, by the will of the Holy Peter himself, the Cardinal-Chancellor was Pope. From the funeral procession Hildebrand flew to the pulpit. With impassioned gestures, and in a voice inaudible amidst the uproar, he seemed to be imploring silence; but the tempest was not to be allayed until one of the Cardinals announced, in the name of the Sacred College, their unanimous election of him whom the Apostle and the multitude had thus simultaneously



chosen. Crowned with the tiara, and arrayed in the gorgeous robes of a Pope-elect, Gregory the Seventh was then presented to the people. Their joyous exultation and the pomp of the inaugural ceremonies blended and contrasted strangely with the studied gloom and the melancholy dirge of the funeral rites.

That this electoral drama was a mere improvisation, may be credited by those before whose faith all the mountains of improbability give way. But thus to reach the summit of sacerdotal dominion as if by constraint; and thus, without forfeiting the praise of severe sanctity, to obtain the highest of this world's dignities; and thus to anticipate and defeat the too probable resistance of the Imperial Court; and thus to afford the Cardinals the opportunity and the excuse for the prompt exercise of their yet precarious electoral privilege — was a combination and a coincidence of felicities such as fortune, unaided by policy, seldom, if ever, bestows even on her choicest favourites. He who had nominated five Popes, was, assuredly, no passive instrument in his own nomination. His letters, written on the occasion, would alone be sufficient to prove, if proof were wanting, that a career thus far guided by the most profound sagacity, was not abandoned at its crisis to the caprice of a dissolute multitude. To several of his correspondents he addressed pathetic descriptions of his alarm and sorrow, but with such a remarkable uniformity of terms as to force on the reader of them the belief, that the elegiac strain was repeated as often as necessary by his secretaries, with such variations as their taste suggested. To the Emperor he breathed nothing but submission and humility. The most unimpeachable decorum presided over the whole of the ceremonial that followed. Envoys passed and repassed. Men of grave aspect instituted tedious enquiries. Solemn notaries attested prolix reports; and in due time the world was informed that, of his grace and clemency, Henry, King of Germany and Italy, calling himself Emperor, had ratified the election of his dearly beloved father, Gregory the Seventh — the world, meanwhile, well knowing that, despite the Emperor's hostility, the Pope was able and resolved to maintain his own; and that the Emperor would, if possible, have driven the Pope from Rome, as the most dangerous of rebels and the most subtle of usurpers.

But Henry was ill prepared for such an effort. During the first six years of his reign the affairs of his vast hereditary empire had been conducted by his widowed mother. She was formed to love, to reverence, and to obey. In an age less rude, or in a station less exalted, her much long-suffering, her self-sustaining dignity, and the tenderness of her gentle spirit, might have enabled her to win the obedience of the heart. But her mind was ductile, her con-

science enfeebled by a morbid sensibility, and her character formed by nature and by habit for subservience to any form of superstitious terror. She was surrounded by rapacious nobles whom no sacrifices could conciliate, and by lordly churchmen, who at once exacted and betrayed her confidence. Though severely virtuous, she was assailed by shameless calumnies. Her female rule was resented by the pride of Teutonic chivalry; and fraud and violence combined to inflict the deepest wound on her rights as a sovereign and her feelings as a mother.

At Kaiserworth, on the Rhine, Agnes and her son, then in his thirteenth year, were reposing from the fatigues of an imperial progress. A galley, impelled by long lines of oars, and embellished with every ornament which art and luxury could command, appeared on the broad stream before them. Attended by a train of lords and servitors, Anno, the Archbishop of Cologne, descended from the gallant barge, and pressed the royal youth to inspect so superb a specimen of aquatic architecture and episcopal magnificence. Henry gladly complied, and, as the rowers bent to their oars, he enjoyed with boyish delight the rapidity with which one object after another receded from his view, till, turning to the companions of what had hitherto seemed a mere holiday voyage, he read in the anxious countenances of the commanders, and the vehement efforts of the boatmen, that he was a prisoner, and more than ever an orphan. With characteristic decision, he at once plunged into the water, and endeavoured to swim to shore; but the toils were upon him. A confederacy, formed by the Archbishops of Cologne and Mentz, and supported by the Dukes of Bavaria and Tuscany, consigned their young sovereign to a captivity at once sumptuous and debilitating. They usurped the powers, and plundered the treasures, of the crown. They bestowed on themselves and their adherents forests, manors, abbeys, and lordships. But to the future ruler of so many nations they denied the discipline befitting his age, and the instruction due to his high prospects. They encouraged him, and with fatal success, to enervate by ceaseless amusement, and to debase by precocious debauchery, a mind naturally brave and generous. Anno has been canonised by the See of Rome. By the same ghostly tribunal, the monarch whom he kidnapped, betrayed, and corrupted, was excluded from the communion of the Church when living, and from her consecrated soil when dead. Impartial history will reverse either sentence, and will pronounce her anathemas rather on St. Anno, by whom the princely boy was exposed to the furnace of temptation, than on him in whose young mind the seeds of vice, so unsparingly sown, sprung up with such deadly luxuriance.

The heart of youth was never won by habitual indulgence. As Henry advanced towards manhood, the Archbishops of Cologne and Mentz discovered that they were the objects of his settled antipathy, and that they had to dread the full weight of a resentment at once just, vindictive, and unscrupulous. To avert that danger they transferred the charge of the royal youth to Adalbert, Archbishop of Bremen, rightly judging that his skill in courtly arts (for he had lived on affectionate terms with the deceased emperor) might enable him to win his pupil's regard, but erroneously believing that his ecclesiastical zeal (for it seemed the master passion of his soul) would induce him to employ that advantage in the defence and service of the hierarchy.

Adalbert, whose life is written in the Church History of Adam of Bremen, was a man whose character was so strangely composite, and whose purposes were so immutably single, that he might have suggested portraits to Scott, epigrams to Young, antitheses to Pope, an analysis to Dryden, or to Shakspeare himself some rich and all-reconciling harmony. According to the aspect in which he was viewed, he might with equal justice be regarded as a saint or a man of pleasure, as a scholar or a courtier, as a politician or a wit. Now washing the feet of beggars, eloquently expounding Christian truth, or indignantly denouncing the sins of the rich and the great, the shifting scene exhibited him amidst a throng of actors, jugglers, and buffoons, or as the soul and centre of a society where lords and ambassadors, prelates and priests of low degree, met to enjoy his good cheer, to partake of his merriment, and to endure his relentless sarcasms. At the very moment when, with irresistible address, he was insinuating himself into the favour of some potent count or bishop, the approach of another dignitary would rouse him to bitter and unmeasured invective. From the laughing playfellow of his companions he would pass at once into their fierce assailant, and then atone for the extravagance of his passion by a bounty not less extravagant. But whether he preached or gave alms, whether philosophy, or fun, or satire, was his passing whim, he still enjoyed one luxury which habit had rendered indispensable. Parasites were ever at hand to confirm his own conviction, that Adalbert of Bremen was an universal genius, and that, under his fostering care, the see of Bremen was destined to become the northern capital of the universal Church.

Nor was it strange that he believed them. Of the countless victims of self-idolatry, few have had so many seductions to that intoxicating worship. A military as well as an ecclesiastical prince, he witnessed the extension of his archiepiscopal dominion far along the shores of the Elbe and the Baltic. Kings solicited his personal



friendship. Sweden and the Empire accepted him as the mediator of peace. Envoys from every state in Europe, not excepting Constantinople, thronged his palace. He was at once the confidential adviser of the Pope and the chief minister of the Emperor, and even boasted (with whatever truth) that he had declined the papacy itself. But this earlier Wolsey, like his great antitype, longed for some imperishable monument of his glory. Bremen was the Ipswich of Adalbert; the site selected, but in vain, for perpetuating to the remotest ages the memory of an ambition less ennobled by the greatness of its aims, than debased by an insatiable vanity. To aggrandise his diocese he builded and fortified, negotiated and intrigued; became by turns a suitor and an oppressor; conciliated attachments and braved enmities; and lived and died the imaginary patriarch of the imaginary patriarchate of the German and Scandinavian nations.

Brightly dawned on the young Henry the day which transferred the charge of his person and of his education from the austere Anno to the princely Adalbert. The Archbishop of Cologne had rebuked the vices he indulged. The stouter conscience of the Archbishop of Bremen stood in need of no such self-soothing compromise. He fairly threw the reins on the neck of his royal charge, who invoked the aid of young and profligate companions in the use or the abuse of this welcome indulgence. His tutors had sown the wind; his people were now to reap the whirlwind. Of the domestic life of the young Emperor, the dark tale recorded by the chroniclers of his age would not be endured by the delicacy of our own. His public acts might seem to have been prompted by the determination to exasperate to madness the national pride, the moral sense, and the religious feelings of his subjects. Yet even when they were thus provoked, their resentment slumbered. A popular address, a noble presence, and the indulgence so liberally yielded to the excesses of the great, the prosperous, and the young, gave scope for the full expansion of his crimes and follies. At the Lateran, the influence of his personal qualities was unfelt. Roused to a just indignation by the frequent intelligence of a life so debauched and of a reign so impious, Alexander cited the Emperor to appear at Rome, there to answer in person to the apostolic throne for the simony and the other offences imputed to him. The voice was Alexander's voice, but the hand was the hand of Gregory.

Between the day on which Hildebrand had conducted Leo the Ninth into Rome as a simple pilgrim, to the time of his own tumultuary election, the quarter of a century had intervened. During the whole of that period he had been the confidential

minister and guide of the papacy. In each of the five pontificates which he nominally served, and really governed, the Holy See had pursued the same aggressive policy, with a steadfastness indicating the guidance of one far-seeing mind, gifted with patience to await, with promptitude to discern, and with courage to seize, the moments of successful advance. When, therefore, the citation of Henry was issued in the name of the dying Pope, none doubted that this audacious act, then without a parallel in history, had been dictated by the same stern and unrelenting councillor. When tidings reached the Imperial Court that the voice of the people and the votes of the cardinals had placed in Gregory's hands the mysterious keys and the sharp sword of Peter, none doubted the near approach of the conflict which was to assign the supreme dominion over the Christian world either to the German sceptre or to the Roman crosier. That, after ages of war and controversy, they should peacefully exercise a concurrent yet divided rule, would have seemed an idle dream to a generation, whose feudal theory of government had for its basis the principle of various gradations of dependency on some one common head, or suzerain.

With a life stained by no sensual or malignant crime, (a praise of which his contemporary and rancorous biographer, Cardinal Benno, is the reluctant and unconscious witness,) and degraded by the pursuit of no ends exclusively selfish (for, except as the champion of the Church, he neither obtained nor sought any personal aggrandisement), Pope Hildebrand yielded himself freely to the current of those awful thoughts which have peopled the brain of each in turn of the successors of Peter, the basest and the most impure of them scarcely excepted. A mystery to himself, he had become the supreme vicar of Christ on earth; the predestined heir of a throne among those saints who should one day judge the world; the mortal head of an immortal dynasty; the depositary of a power delegated yet divine; the viceroy to whom had been entrusted by God himself the care of interests, and the dispensation of blessings and of curses, which, by comparison, reduced to inappreciable vanities all the good and evil of this transitory world. Resolute as he was, he appears to have trembled at the contrast between the weakness of his human nature and the weight of these majestic responsibilities. With the Abbots of Clugni and of Monte Cassino he maintained a relation as much resembling friendship as was compatible with the austerity of his nature and of his habits; and to them he depicted the secret tumults of his mind, in terms of which it would be impossible to deny either the sincerity or the eloquence.

Before his prophetic eye arose a vast theocratic state in which political and religious society were to be harmonised,

or rather were to be absorbed into each other. At the head of this all-embracing polity, the Bishop of Rome was to assert his legitimate authority over all the kings and rulers of the earth. In immediate dependence on him was to be ranged the circle of his liege spiritual lords—some residing at the seat of empire as electors, councillors, and ministers to the supreme potentate; others presiding over the fraternities, the provinces, and the sees of which his empire was to be composed. At the capital of this hierarchal state were to be exercised the various powers of government—legislative, administrative, and judicial. There also were to be held the occasional meetings of the extraordinary or ecumenical legislature. To the infallible sovereign of this new Jerusalem were to be assigned prerogatives limited only by his own conscience, and restrained by no power but that of God himself. To the Emperor, the Kings, the Dukes, and Counts, his feudatories, was to be entrusted a ministry altogether subordinate and auxiliary to his. They were to maintain order, to command armies, to collect revenues, to dispense justice. But they were to hold their crowns or coronets at the pleasure of the Autocrat, to justify to him the use of their inferior authority, and to employ it in support of his power, which, as it was derived from heaven itself, could acknowledge no superior, equal, or competitor on earth. But woe—such woe as vengeance, almighty and unrelenting, could inflict—on him who, wielding the pontifical sceptre in the sacred name of Christ, should impiously use it in any spirit, or for any ends, not in accordance with these awful purposes which once made Christ himself a sojourner among men! Heathen Rome had been raised up to conquer and to civilise. To Christian Rome was appointed a far loftier destiny. It was hers to mediate between hostile nations—to reconcile sovereigns and their people—to superintend the policy, restrain the ambition, redress the injustice, and punish the crimes of princes—and to render the Apostolic Throne the source and centre of an holy influence, which, diffused through every member of the social body, should inform, and animate, and amalgamate the whole, and realise the inspired delineation of that yet unborn age, when the lion and the lamb should lie down together, with a little child their leader.

Sublime as were the visions which thus thronged on the soul of Gregory the Seventh, and which still shed a glowing light over his three hundred and fifty extant letters, life was never, for a single day, a state of mere visionary existence to him. Before him lay the approaching struggle with Henry, with Honorius, with the ecclesiastics of Lombardy, with the German people, whose loyalty had so long survived the sorest provocation, and even with many of

the German prelates, who ascribed to the successor of Charlemagne and of Otho the same rights which these great monarchs had exercised over the Pontiffs of an earlier generation. Nor was he unconscious that the way for his theocracy must be paved by reforms so painful, as to convert into inexorable antagonists a large number of those on whose attachment to his person and his laws he might otherwise have most implicitly relied.

Yet it was with no doubtful prospects of success that he girded himself for the battle. His Norman feudatories to the south, and his Tuscan alliance to the north, promised security to the papal city. Disaffection was widely spread among the commonalty of the Empire. The Saxons were on the verge of revolt. The Dukes of Swabia, Carinthia, and Bavaria, were brooding over insufferable wrongs. From the young and debauched Emperor, it seemed idle to dread any resolved or formidable hostility. From the other powers of Europe Henry could expect no succour. From every region of Christendom, the Church, in a voice which, though inarticulate, was audible to the Supreme Pontiff, invoked a remedy for the traffic in holy things, and for the fearful pollutions beneath which she was groaning; and that heavenly Bride assured him that when he should have strangled the monsters of iniquity by whom she was oppressed, he should be recompensed by every honour which man could confer, and by every benediction which God bestows on his most favoured servants. He heard, and he obeyed.

From the most remote Christian antiquity, the marriage of clergymen had been regarded with the dislike, and their celibacy rewarded by the commendation, of the people. Among the ecclesiastical heroes of the first four centuries, it is scarcely possible to point to one who was not, in this respect, an imitator of Paul rather than of Peter. Among the ecclesiastical writers of those times, it is scarcely possible to refer to one by whom the superior sanctity of the unmarried to the conjugal state is not either directly inculcated or tacitly assumed. This prevailing sentiment had ripened into a customary law, and the observance of that custom had been enforced by edicts and menaces, by rewards and penalties. But nature had triumphed over tradition, and had proved too strong for Councils and for Popes.

When Hildebrand ascended the chair first occupied by a married Apostle, his spirit burned within him to see that marriage held in her impure and unhallowed bonds a large proportion of those who ministered at the altar, and who handled there the very substance of the incarnate Deity. It was a profanation well adapted to arouse the jealousy, not less than to wound the conscience, of the Pontiff. Secular cares suited ill with the stern duties of a theocratic ministry.



Domestic affections would choke or enervate that corporate passion which might otherwise be directed with unmitigated ardour towards their chief and centre. Clerical celibacy, on the other hand, would exhibit to those who trod the outer courts of the great Christian temple, the impressive image of a transcendental perfection, too pure not only for the coarser delights of sense, but even for the alloy of conjugal or parental love. It would fill the world with adherents of Rome, in whom every feeling would be quenched which could rival that sacred allegiance. From every monastery might be summoned a phalanx of allies to overpower the more numerous, but dispersed and feeble antagonists of such an innovation. In every mitred churchman it would find an active partisan. The people, ever rigid in exacting eminent virtue from their teachers, would be rude but effective zealots of a ghostly discipline from which they were themselves to be exempt.

With such anticipations, Gregory, within a few weeks from his accession, convened a council at the Lateran, and proposed a law, not, as formerly, forbidding the marriage of priests, but commanding every priest to put away his wife, and requiring all laymen to absent themselves from any sacred office which any wedded priest might presume to celebrate. Never was legislative foresight so verified by the result. What the great Council of Nicæa had attempted in vain, the Bishops assembled in the presence of Hildebrand accomplished, at his instance, at once, effectually, and for ever. Lamentable indeed were the complaints, and bitter the reproaches, of the sufferers. 'Were the most sacred ties thus to be torn asunder at the ruthless bidding of an Italian priest? Were men to become angels, or were angels to be brought down from heaven to minister among men?' Eloquence was never more pathetic, more just, or more unavailing. Prelate after prelate silenced these remonstrances by austere rebukes. Legate after legate arrived with papal menaces to the remonstrants. Monks and abbots preached the continency which they at least professed. Kings and barons laughed over their cups at many a merry tale of compulsory divorce. Mobs pelted, hooted, and besmeared with profane and filthy baptisms the unhappy victims of pontifical rigour. It was a struggle not to be prolonged. Broken hearts pined and died away in silence. Expostulations subsided into murmurs, and murmurs were drowned in the general shout of victory. Eight hundred years have since passed away. Amidst the wreck of laws, opinions, and institutions, this decree of Hildebrand's at this day rules the Latin Church, in every land where sacrifices are still offered on her altars. Among us, but not of us,—valuing their rights as citizens, chiefly as instrumental to their powers as

churchmen—ministers of love, to whom the heart of a husband and a father is an inscrutable mystery—teachers of duties, the most sacred of which they may not practise—compelled daily to gaze on the most polluted imagery of man's fallen heart, but denied the refuge of nature from a polluted imagination—professors of a virtue of which, from the death of the righteous Abel down to the birth of the fervent Peter, no solitary example is recorded in Holy Writ—excluded from that posthumous life in remote descendants, in the devout anticipation of which the patriarchs were enabled to walk meekly, but exultingly, with their God—the sacerdotal caste yet flourishes in every Christian land, the imperishable and gloomy monument both of that far-sighted genius which thus devised the means of papal despotism, and of that short-sighted wisdom which proposed to itself that despotism as a legitimate and a laudable end.

With this Spartan rigour towards his adherents, Gregory combined a more than Athenian address and audacity towards his rivals and antagonists. So long as the monarchs of the West might freely bestow on the objects of their choice the sees and abbeys of their states, papal dominion could be but a passing dream, and papal independency an empty boast. Corrupt motives usually determined their choice; and the objects of it were but seldom worthy. Ecclesiastical dignities were often sold to the highest bidder, and then the purchaser indemnified himself by a use no less mercenary of his own patronage; or they were given as a reward to some martial retainer, and the new churchman could not forget that he had once been a soldier. The cope and the coat-of-mail were worn alternately. The same hand bore the crucifix in the holy festival, and the sword in the day of battle. Episcopal warriors and abbatial courtiers thus learned to regard themselves rather as feudatories holding of their temporal lord, than as liegemen owing obedience to their spiritual chief. In the hands of the newly consecrated Bishop was placed a staff, and on his finger a ring, which, received as they were from his temporal sovereign, proclaimed that homage and fealty were due to him alone. And thus the sacerdotal Proconsuls of Rome became, in sentiment at least, and by the powerful obligation of honour, the vicegerents, not of the Pontifex Maximus, but of the Emperor.

To dissolve this *trinoda necessitas* of simoniacal preferments, military service, and feudal vassalage, a feebler spirit would have exhorted, negotiated, and compromised. To Gregory it belonged first to subdue men by courage, and then to rule them by reverence. Addressing the world in the language of his generation, he proclaimed to every potentate, from the Baltic to the Straits of Calpé, that all human authority being holden of the divine, and God him-

self having delegated his own sovereignty over men to the Prince of the Sacred College, a divine right to universal obedience was the inalienable attribute of the Roman Pontiffs, of whom, as the supreme earthly suzerain, emperors and kings held their crowns, patriarchs and bishops their mitres; and held them not mediately through each other, but immediately, as tenants *in capite*, from the one legitimate representative of the great Apostle.

In turning over the collection of the epistles of Hildebrand, we are everywhere met by this doctrine asserted in a tone of the calmest dignity and the most serene conviction. Thus he informs the French monarch that every house in his kingdom owed to Peter, as their father and pastor, an annual tribute of a penny, and he commands his legates to collect it in token of the subjection of France to the Holy See. He assures Solomon, the King of Hungary, that his territories are the property of the Holy Roman Church. Solomon being incredulous and refractory, was dethroned by his competitor for the Hungarian crown. His more prudent successor, Ladislaus, acknowledged himself the vassal of the Pope, and paid him tribute. To Corsica a legate was sent to govern the demesnes of the Papacy in the island, and to recover the rest of it from the Saracens. To the Sardinians an account was despatched of Gregory's title to their obedience, with menaces of a Norman invasion if it should be withheld. On Demetrius, Duke of Dalmatia, we find him conferring the kingly title, reserving a yearly payment of two hundred pieces of silver 'to the holy Pope Gregory and his successors lawfully elected, as supreme lords of the Dalmatian kingdom.' Among the visitors of Rome was a youth, described in one of these epistles as son of the King of Russia. The letter informs the sovereign so designated, that, at the request of the young Prince, the Pontiff had administered to him the oath of fealty to St. Peter and his successors, not doubting that 'it would be approved by the king and all the lords of his kingdom, since the Apostle would henceforth regard their country as his own, and defend it accordingly.' From Sweno the Dane he exacted a promise of subjection. From the recently converted Polanders he demanded and received, as sovereign lord of the country, an annual tribute of an hundred marks in silver. From every part of the European continent Bishops were summoned by these imperial missives to Rome, and there were either condemned and deposed, or absolved and confirmed in their sees. In France, in Spain, and in Germany, we find his legates exercising the same power; and the correspondence records many a stern rebuke, sometimes for their undue remissness, sometimes for their misapplied severity. The rescripts of Trajan scarcely exhibit a firmer assurance both of



the right and the power to control every other authority, whether secular or sacerdotal, throughout the civilised world.

There was, however, in the case of the Normans, a memorable exception. Robert the Norman conqueror of Sicily, and William the Norman conqueror of England, steeped in blood and sacrilege, were the most shameless and cruel of usurpers. The groans and curses of the oppressed cried aloud for vengeance against them. But the apostolic indignation, though roused by the active vices of the Emperor, and by the apathetic depravity of Philip of France, had for these tyrants no menaces of wrath, no exhortations to repentance. Robert was embraced and honoured as the faithful ally of Rome. William was addressed in the blandest accents of esteem and tenderness. 'You exhibit towards us' (such is the style) 'the attachment of a dutiful son, yea, of a son whose heart is moved by the love of his mother. Therefore, my beloved son, let your conduct be all that your language has been. Let what you have promised be effectually performed.' The injunction was not disobeyed; for even of promises the grim conqueror of the North had been sufficiently parsimonious. As Duke of Normandy, he remitted to the Pope the amount of certain dues. As King of England, he indignantly refused the required oath of fealty. 'I hold my kingdom of God and of my sword,' was his stern and decisive answer. Something the papal legate dared to mutter of the worthlessness of gold without obedience; but the gold was accepted, and the disobedience endured. These were not the days of John, surnamed Lackland; and for Innocent the Third was reserved, by his great predecessor, the glory of receiving, from an English sovereign on his bended knee, the crown which, while it rested on the head of William, challenged equal honours with the papal tiara. For concessions more favourable to his hopes of unlimited dominion, the Pontiff turned to a sovereign whose crimes no triumphs had sanctified, and no heroism redeemed.

Alexander's citation had been despised by Henry, and was not revived by Hildebrand. Every post from Germany brought fresh proof that, without the use of weapons so hazardous, the Emperor must, ere long, be reduced to solicit the aid of Rome on such terms as Rome might see fit to dictate. Dark as were the middle ages, the German court had light enough (if we may credit the chroniclers) to anticipate our own enlightened Irish policy. The ancient chiefs of Saxony were imprisoned, and their estates confiscated and granted to absent lords and prelates. Tithe proctors hovered like birds of prey over the Saxon fields. A project was formed for driving the ancient inhabitants into a Saxon pale, and for converting the land into a great Swabian Colony. Castles frowned on

every height. Their garrisons pillaged and enslaved the helpless people. Alliances were formed with the Bavarian and the Dane to crush a race hated for their former pre-eminence, and despised for their recent sufferings. Nothing was wanting to complete the parallel but discord and dejection amongst the intended victims.

Groaning under the oppressions, and penetrating the designs of their sovereign, the Saxons solicited for their leaders an audience at Goslar. The appointed day arrived. The deputies presented themselves at the palace. Henry was engaged at a game of hazard, and bade them wait till he had played it out. A stern and indignant demand for justice repelled the insult. A second time, in all the insolence of youth, Henry returned a contemptuous answer. In a few hours he found himself blockaded at his castle of Hartzburg by a vast assemblage of armed men, under the command of Otho of Nordheim; the Tell or Hofer of his native land.

Escaping with difficulty, the Emperor traversed Western Germany to collect forces for crushing the Saxon insurgents. But the spell of his Imperial name, and of his noble presence, was broken. The crimes of a defeated fugitive were unpardonable. His allies made common cause with the Saxons, whom they had so lately leagued to destroy. Long repressed resentment burst out in the grossest indignities against the recreant sovereign. Unworthy to wear his spurs or his crown, (so ran the popular arraignment,) he descended at a step from the summit of human greatness, to the condition of an outcast from human society. A diet had been summoned for his deposition. His sceptre had been offered to Rudolf of Swabia. A few days more, and his crown, if not his life, would have been forfeited, when an opportune illness, and a rumour of his death, awakened among his subjects the dormant feelings of attachment and compassion. Haggard from disease, abject in appearance, destitute, deserted, and unhappy, he presented himself to the citizens of Worms. The ebbing tide of loyalty rushed violently back into its wonted channels. Shouts of welcome ran along the walls. Every house-top rang with acclamations. Women wept over his wrongs. Men-at-arms devoted their lives, and rich burghers their purses, to his cause. The diet was dissolved, Rudolf fled, and it remained for Henry to practise, on his recovered throne, the lessons he had learned in the school of adversity.

Those lessons had been unfolded and enforced by the parental admonitions of Gregory. The royal penitent answered by promises of amendment, 'full' (as the Pope declared) 'of sweetness and of duty.' Nor was this a mere lip homage. To prove his sincerity, he abandoned to the Pope the government of the great see

and city of Milan, the strongest hold of the Imperialists in Italy. A single desire engrossed the heart of Henry. No sacrifice seemed too costly which might enable him to inflict an overwhelming vengeance on the Saxon people; no price excessive by which he could purchase the aid, or at least the neutrality, of Hildebrand in the impending struggle. The concessions were accepted by the Pope, the motive understood, and the equivalent rendered. With gracious words to the Emperor and to Rudolf, with pacific councils and vague promises to the Saxons, Hildebrand retired from all further intervention in a strife of which it remained for him to watch the issue, and to reap the advantage.

It was in the depth of a severe winter that Henry, hoping to surprise the insurgents, marched from Worms at the head of forces furnished by the wealth and zeal of that faithful city. Drifts of snow obstructed his advance. The frozen streams could no longer turn the mills on which he depended for subsistence. Meteors blazed in the skies, and the dispirited soldiers trembled at such accumulated omens of disaster. In that anxious host, one bosom alone was heedless of danger, and unconscious of suffering. He, who had hitherto been known only as a profligate and luxurious youth, now urged on his followers through cold, disease, and famine, to the Saxon frontier. But there Otho awaited him at the head of a large and well-disciplined army. The Imperialists declined the unequal encounter. Again Henry was reduced to capitulate. Humbled a second time before his subjects, he bound himself to dismantle his fortresses, to withdraw his garrisons, to restore the confiscated fiefs, to confirm their ancient Saxon privileges, and to grant an amnesty unlimited and universal.

The treaty of Gerstungen (so it was called) was dictated by animosity and distrust, and was carried into execution by the conquerors in the spirit of vindictive triumph. They expelled from his residence at Goslar their dejected king and his household, and destroyed the town of Hartzburg with his royal sepulchre, where lay the bones of his infant son, and of others of his nearest kindred. The graves were broken open, and their ghastly contents exposed to shameful and inhuman contumelies — a wild revenge, and a too plausible pretext for a fearful and not distant retribution.

Henry returned to his Rhenish provinces to meditate vengeance. Reckless of any remoter danger in which the indulgence of that fierce passion might involve him, he invoked the arbitrament of the Pope, and called on him to excommunicate the sacrilegious race who had burned the church, and desecrated the sepulchres, of his forefathers. Gregory watched the gathering tempest of

civil war, received the appeals of the contending parties, and answered both, by renewed injunctions of obedience to himself. To the Saxons he sent homilies; to the Emperor an embassy, graced by the name and the presence of his mother, Agnes. She bore a papal mandate to her son to enforce the celibacy of the clergy, and to restore to its lawful channels the patronage of the Church. Henry promised obedience. The legates then convoked a national synod, to be held in Germany under their own presidency. To this encroachment also, Henry submitted. A remonstrance against it from the Archbishop of Bremen was answered by a legantine sentence suspending him from his see. Still the Emperor was passive. Another sentence of the papal ambassadors exiled from the court and presence of Henry five of his councillors whom Alexander had excommunicated. No signal of resistance was given by their insulted sovereign. Edicts for the government of the Teutonic Church were promulgated without the usual courtesy of asking his concurrence. They provoked from him no show of resentment. Their work accomplished, the legates returned to Rome, the messengers of successes over the authority of the Cæsar, more important than any former Pope had ventured to anticipate. Applause, honours, and preferments rewarded the associates of Agnes; while to herself were given assurances of celestial joy, and of a distinguished place among the choristers of heaven.

Her less aspiring son fed his mind with hopes of vengeance, rendered as he thought more sure by all his concessions to the Roman Pontiff. Twice, indeed, he had recoiled ignominiously from the Saxon frontier. But from defeat itself he might draw the means of victory. By the great feudatories of the Empire, the spectacle of armed peasants and wealthy burghers imposing terms of peace on the successor of Charlemagne, had been regarded with proud scorn and indignation. They resented the rising fame and influence of Otho. He and his followers might become strong enough to resume by arms the estates they had lost by confiscation. Rumours were already rife of such designs. To fan these flames and deepen these alarms, and thus to excite among restless chiefs and predatory bands the appetite for war and plunder, became the easy and successful labour of the impatient Emperor. At Henry's summons, the whole strength of Germany was collected on the Elbe to crush, in his quarrel, the power they had so lately aided to depose him. There were to be seen the crucifix of the Abbot of Fulda, and there the sacred banner of the Archbishop of Mentz. There Guelph, the Bavarian, raised his ducal standard to reconquer the broad lands restored to their former owners by the treaty of Ger-



stungen. There, surrounded by the chivalry of Lorraine, and restored by the Emperor to that forfeited principality, Godfrey repaid the boon by the desertion of the alliance, conjugal as well as political, which bound him to the House of Tuscany. There appeared the King of Hungary, lured by the hope of new provinces to be assigned to him on the dismemberment of Saxony. And there, in the centre of countless pennons, came Rudolf, to prove his loyalty to the prince whose throne he had so recently endeavoured to usurp.

The tide of war rolled on towards the devoted land. It had been saved, if penitence, humility, and prayer were of the same power in the courts of earth as in those of heaven. It had been saved, if courage gathered from despair, and guided by patriotism, could have availed against such a confederacy of numbers and of discipline. But prayer was vain, and patriotism impotent. A long summer's day had reached its close, when, under the command of their great leader Otho, the Saxon lines approached the Unstrut. On the opposite banks of that stream the Imperialists had already encamped. Neither army was aware of the vicinity of the other, and Henry had retired to rest, when Rudolf roused him with the intelligence that the insurgent forces were at hand, unarmed, and heedless of their danger, the ready prey of a sudden and immediate attack. The Emperor threw himself in a transport of gratitude at the feet of his adviser, and, leaping on his horse, led forward his forces to the promised victory.

In this strange world of ours, tragedies, of which the dire plot and dark catastrophe might seem to be borrowed from hell, are not seldom depicted by historical dramatists in colours clear and brilliant as those which may be imagined to repose over Paradise. One of the mitred combatants has sung, and Lambert, the chronicler of Aschafnaburg, has narrated the battle of the Unstrut. The Bishop's hexameters have all the charm which usually belongs to episcopal charges. But Lambert is among the most graphic and animated of historians. His picture of the field glows with his own military ardour, and is thronged with incidents and with figures which might well be transferred to the real canvass. Among them we distinguish the ill-arranged Saxon lines broken, flying, and again forming at the voice of Otho as it rises above the tumult, and then rushing after him with naked swords, and naked bosoms, on the main battle of the triumphant invaders. And still the eye follows Otho wherever there are fainting hearts to rally, or a fierce onslaught to repel;—and we seem almost to hear the shrill war-cry of the Swabians from the van of the Imperial host, where, by a proud hereditary right, they had claimed to stand;—

and Rudolf their leader, the very minister of death, is ever in the midst of the carnage, himself, as if in covenant with the grave, unharmed;—and in the agony and crisis of the strife, Henry, the idol to whom this bloody sacrifice is offered, is seen in Lambert's battle-piece leaping at the head of his reserve on his exhausted enemies, sweeping whole ranks into confused masses, and amid shrieks, and groans, and fruitless prayers, and fruitless curses, immolating them to his insatiable revenge.

The sun went down on that Aceldama amidst the exultations of the victorious allies. It rose on them the following morning agitated by grief, by discord, and by disaffection. Many nobles who had fought the day before under the Imperial banner, were stretched on the field of battle. The enthusiasm of the Saxons had proved at how fearful a price, if at all, the selfish ends of the confederacy must be attained. They mourned the extinction of one of the eyes of Germany. Silently but rapidly the armament dissolved. Godfrey alone remained to prosecute the war. With his aid it was brought by Henry to a successful issue. A capitulation placed Otho and the other leaders in the Emperor's power. With their persons secured, their estates forfeited, and their resources destroyed, he returned to join with the loyal citizens of Worms in chanting the *'Te Deum laudamus.'* The same sacred strain had but a few days before celebrated at Rome a still more important and enduring victory.

Gregory had rightly judged, that while the rival princes were immersed in civil war, he might securely convene the princes of the Church to give effect to designs of far deeper significance. The long aisles of the Lateran were crowded with grave Canonists and mitred Abbots, with Bishops and Cardinals, with the high functionaries, and the humble apparitors, of the Papal State. Proudly eminent above them all, sat the Vicar and Vicegerent of the King of kings. Masses were sung, and homilies were delivered, and rites were performed, of which the origin might be traced back to the worship of the Capitoline Jove; and then was enacted, by the ecclesiastical Senate, a law, not unlike the most arrogant of those which eleven centuries before had been promulgated in the Capitol. It forbade the kings and rulers of the earth to exercise their ancient right of investiture of any spiritual dignity, and transferred to the Pope alone a patronage and an influence more than sufficient to balance, within their own dominions, all the powers of all the monarchs of Christendom. In the darkest hours of Imperial despotism, the successors of Julius had never enjoyed, or demanded, an authority so wide or so absolute. Even the daring spirit by which the decree had been dictated, drew

back from the immediate publication of it. The Pope intimated to the German court and prelates the other acts of the council, but passed over in silence the great edict for which they had been assembled, and by which they were to be immortalised. It reposed in the Papal Chancery as an authority to be invoked at a more convenient season, and, in the meantime, as a text for the rulers of the earth to ponder, and for the learned to interpret. To Hildebrand it belonged neither to expound nor to threaten, but to act.

The Bishop of Lucca was dead: the Pope nominated his successor. The Bishop of Bamberg was accused of simony: the Pope suspended him. The Archbishop of Bremen still denied the right of Papal legates to preside in a German synod: the Pope deprived him of his see, and of the holy sacraments. The Bishops of Pavia, Turin, and Placentia adhered to Honorius: the Pope deposed them. Henry's five exiled councillors gave no signs of repentance: the Pope again excommunicated them. The Normans invaded the Roman territory: the Pope assailed them by a solemn anathema. Philip of France continued to indulge himself, and to pillage every one else: the Pope upbraided and menaced him. Thus with maledictions, sometimes as deadly as the Pontine miasma, sometimes as innocuous as the Mediterranean breeze, he waged war with his antagonists, and exercised, in reality, the powers which he yet hesitated to assert in words.

To the conqueror of Saxony these encroachments and anathemas of the Pontiff appeared more offensive than formidable. He retaliated rather by scorn than by active hostility. He heaped favours on his own excommunicated councillors — sent one of his chaplains to ascend the vacant episcopal throne of Lucca — nominated an obscure and scandalous member of his own household for the princely mitre of Cologne—and forbade his Saxon subjects to appeal to Rome, even in cases exclusively ecclesiastical. To Henry, the Pontiff seemed an angry, arrogant, vituperative, old man, best to be encountered by contempt. To Gregory, the Emperor appeared as the feeble and unconscious agent in a providential scheme for subjecting the secular to the spiritual dynasty. To such as could read the signs of the times, it was evident that, on either side, this contempt was misplaced; and that a long and sanguinary conflict drew near, by which the future destinies of the world would be determined.

Events hurried rapidly onward to that crisis. Complaints were preferred to the Holy See of crimes committed by Henry against the Saxon Church which cried for vengeance, and of vices practised by him in private, which rendered him unfit for communion with



his fellow-Christians. Gregory cited the Emperor to appear before him to answer these charges. The Emperor, if we may believe the papal historians, answered by an attempt to assassinate the author of so presumptuous a citation.

On Christmas eve, in the year 1075, the city of Rome was visited by a dreadful tempest. Not even the full moon of Italy could penetrate the dense mass of superincumbent clouds. Darkness brooded over the land, and the trembling spectators believed that the day of final judgment was about to dawn. In this war of the elements, however, two processions were seen advancing to the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore. At the head of one was the aged Hildebrand, conducting a few priests to worship at the shrine of the Virgo Deipara. The other was preceded by Cencius, a Roman noble. His followers were armed as for some desperate enterprise. At each pause in the roar of the tempest might be heard the hallelujahs of the worshippers, or the voice of the Pontiff pouring out benedictions on the little flock which knelt before him—when the arm of Cencius grasped his person, and the sword of some yet more daring ruffian inflicted a wound on his forehead. Bound with cords, stripped of his sacred vestments, beaten, and subjected to the basest indignities, the venerable minister of Christ was carried to a fortified mansion within the walls of the city, again to be removed, at daybreak, to exile, or to death. Women were there with women's sympathy and kindly offices, but they were rudely put aside; and a drawn sword was already aimed at the Pontiff's bosom, when the cries of a fierce multitude, threatening to burn or batter down the house, arrested the arm of the assassin. An arrow, discharged from below, reached and slew him. The walls rocked beneath the strokes of the maddened populace, and Cencius, falling at his prisoner's feet, became himself a suppliant for pardon, and for life.

In profound silence, and undisturbed serenity, Hildebrand had thus far submitted to these atrocious indignities. The occasional raising of his eyes towards heaven, alone indicated his consciousness of them. But to the supplication of his prostrate enemy he returned an instant and a calm assurance of forgiveness. He rescued Cencius from the exasperated besiegers, dismissed him in safety and in peace, and returned, amidst the acclamations of the whole Roman people, to complete the interrupted solemnities of Santa Maria Maggiore.

That Henry instigated this crime, is an accusation of which no proof is extant, and to which all probabilities are opposed. But such a belief was current at the time; and the contest thenceforward assumed all the bitterness of personal animosity. To the

charges of sacrilege, impurity, and assassination, preferred against the Emperor, his partisans answered by denouncing the Pope himself, at a Synod convened at Worms, as baseborn, and as guilty of murder, simony, necromancy, and devil worship, of habitual, though concealed, profligacy, and of an impious profanation of the Eucharist. Fortunately for the fame of Gregory, his enemies have written a book. Cardinal Benno, one of the most inveterate of them, has bequeathed to us a compendium of all those synodal invectives. The guilt of a base birth is established; for Hildebrand's father was a carpenter in the little Tuscan town of Saone. The other imputations are refuted by the evident malignity of the writer, and by the utter failure, or the wild extravagance, of his proofs.

Such, however, was not the judgment of the Synod of Worms. A debate, of two days' continuance, closed with an unanimous vote that Gregory the Seventh should be abjured and deposed. Henry first affixed his signature to the act of abjuration. Then each Archbishop, Bishop, and Abbot, rising in his turn, subscribed the same fatal scroll. Scarcely was the assembly dissolved, before Imperial messengers were on their way to secure the concurrence of other Churches, and the support of the temporal princes. On every side, but especially in Northern Italy, a fierce and sudden flame attested the long smouldering resentment of the priests whom the Pope had divorced from their wives; of the lords whose simoniacal traffic he had arrested; of the princes whose Norman invaders he had cherished; of the ecclesiastics whom his haughty demeanour had incensed; of the licentious whom his discipline had revolted; and of the patriotic whom his ambition had alarmed. The abjuration of Worms was adopted with enthusiasm by another Synod at Placenza. Oaths of awful significance cemented the confederacy. Acts of desperate hostility bore witness to the determination of the confederates to urge the quarrel to extremities. Not a day was to be lost in intimating to Gregory that the apostolic sceptre had fallen from his hands, and that the Christian Church was once more free.

It was now the second week in Lent, in the year 1076. From his throne, beneath the sculptured roof of the Vatican, Gregory, arrayed in the rich mantle, the pall, and the other mystic vestments of pontifical dominion, looked down the far-receding vista of the sacred edifice on the long array of ecclesiastical Lords and Princes, before whom 'Henry King of Germany and Italy, calling himself Emperor,' had been summoned to appear, not as their sovereign to receive their homage, but as a culprit to await their sentence. As he gazed on that new senate, asserting a jurisdiction so majestic

—and listened to harmonies which might not unfitly have accompanied the worship of Eden — and joined in anthems which in far distant ages had been sung by blessed saints in their dark crypts, and by triumphant martyrs in their dying agonies — and inhaled the incense symbolical of the prayers offered by the Catholic Church to her eternal Head — what wonder if, under the intoxicating influence of such a scene and of such an hour, the old man believed that he was himself the apostolic Rock on which her foundations were laid, and that his cause and person were sacred as the will, and invincible as the power, of heaven itself! The ‘Veni Creator’ was on the lips of the papal choir, when Roland, an envoy from the Synods of Worms and Placenza, presented himself before the assembled hierarchy of Rome. His demeanour was fierce, and his speech abrupt. ‘The King and the united Bishops, both of Germany and Italy,’ (such was his apostrophe to the Pope,) ‘transmit to thee this command:—Descend without delay from the throne of St. Peter. Abandon the usurped government of the Roman Church. To such honours none must aspire without the general choice, and the sanction of the Emperor.’ Then addressing the conclave—‘To you, brethren,’ he said, ‘it is commanded, that at the feast of Pentecost ye present yourselves before the King my master, to receive a pope and father from his hands. This pretended pastor is a ravenous wolf.’ A brief pause of mute astonishment gave way to shouts of fury. Swords were drawn, and the audacious herald was about to expiate his temerity with his blood. But Gregory descended from his throne, received from the hands of Roland the letters of the Synods, and, resuming his seat, read them, in a clear and deliberate voice, to the indignant council. Again the sacred edifice rang with a tempest of passionate invective. Again swords were drawn on Roland, and again the storm was composed by the voice of the Pontiff. He spake of prophecies fulfilled in the contumacy of the King, and in the troubles of the faithful. He assured them, that victory would reward their zeal, or divine consolations soothe their defeat; but whether victory or defeat should be their doom, the time, he said, had come when the avenging sword must be drawn to smite the enemy of God, and of His Church.

The speaker ceased and turned for approbation, or at least for acquiescence, not to the enthusiastic throng of mitred or of armed adherents, but to one who, even in that eventful moment, divided with himself the gaze and the sympathy of that illustrious assemblage. For by his side, though in an inferior station, sat Agnes, the Empress-mother, brought there to witness and to ratify the judgment to be pronounced on her only child, whom she had

borne amidst the proudest hopes, and trained for empire beneath the griefs and anxieties of widowhood. She bore, or strove to bear, herself as a daughter of the Church, but could not forget that she was the mother of Henry, when, in all the impersonated majesty of that holy fellowship, Hildebrand, raising his eyes to heaven, with a voice echoing, amidst the breathless silence of the Synod, through the remotest arches of the lofty pile, invoked the holy Peter, prince of the apostles, to hear, and 'Mary the mother of God,' and the blessed Paul, and all the saints, to bear witness, while for the honour and defence of Christ's Church, in the name of the sacred Trinity, and by the power and authority of Peter, he interdicted to King Henry, son of Henry the Emperor, the government of the whole realm of Germany and Italy, absolved all Christians from their oaths and allegiance to him, and bound him with the bond of anathema, 'that the nations may know and acknowledge that thou art Peter, and that, upon thy rock, the Son of the living God hath built His church, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'

When intelligence of the deposition of Henry first astounded the nations of Europe, the glories of Papal Rome seemed to the multitude to have been madly staked on one most precarious issue. Men foretold that the Emperor would promptly and signally punish a treason so audacious, and that the Holy See would, ere long, descend to the level of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Nor did the wisest deem such anticipations unreasonable. They reflected that Henry was still in the very prime of life — that he possessed a force of will which habitual luxury had not impaired, and a throne, in the hearts of his people, which the wildest excess of vice and folly had not subverted — that he reigned over the fairest and the wealthiest portion of the Continent — that he commanded numerous vassals, and could bring into the field powerful armies — that he had crushed rebellion among his subjects, and had no rival to dread among his neighbours — and that the Papacy had flourished under the shelter of the Imperial crown, the authority of which had been so arrogantly defied, and the fierce resentment of which was now inevitably to be encountered. But in the seeming strength of the Imperial resources, there was an inherent weakness; and in the seeming weakness of the Papal cause, a latent but invincible strength. Even Teutonic loyalty had been undermined by the cruelties, the faithlessness, and the tyranny, of the monarch, and the doom of the oppressor was upon him. The cause of Gregory was, on the other hand, in popular estimation, the cause of sanctity and of truth, of primæval discipline and traditionary reverence, and the Pope himself a martyr, who, in all



the majesty of superhuman power, was resolved either to repel the spoiler from the Christian fold, or to lay down his life for the sheep. That these high and lofty purposes really animated the soul, or kindled the imagination, of him to whom they were thus ascribed, it would be presumptuous to deny. But whatever may have been his reliance on the promises of heaven, he certainly combined with it a penetrating insight into the policy of earth. He summoned to his aid his Norman feudatories, and invoked the succour of his Tuscan allies. She who now reigned in Tuscany might be supposed to have been called into being for the single purpose of sustaining, like another Deborah or Judith, the fainting hopes of another Israel.

On the death of Boniface, Duke and Marquis of Tuscany, in 1054, his states descended to his only surviving child, who, under the title of 'The Great Countess,' ruled there until her own death in 1116, first in tutelage, then in conjunction with her mother Beatrice, and during the last thirty-nine years of that long period, in her own plenary and undivided right. Though she married Godfrey of Lorraine in her youth, and Guelph of Bavaria in her more mature age, neither the wit and military genius of her first husband, nor the wisdom and dignity of his successor, could win the heart of Matilda. Her biographer has entered into an elaborate inquiry to establish the fact, that, notwithstanding her nuptial vows with two of the most accomplished princes of that age, she lived and died as in a state of celibacy. Even they who cannot concur with him in pronouncing the sacrifice sublime, will admit that it was at least opportune. While persuading the clergy to put away their wives, she herself repudiated both her husbands. The story, indeed, is not very tractable. Schools for scandal preceded, as they have survived, all the other schools of modern Italy; and whoever has read Goldasti's 'Replication for the Sacred Cæsarean and Royal Majesty of the Franks,' is aware that if Florence had then possessed a comic stage and an Aristophanes, he would have exhibited no less a personage than the great Hildebrand in the chains of no meaner an Aspasia than the great Countess of Tuscany. But large as is the space occupied by this charge, and by the refutation of it, in the annals of those times, it may safely be rejected as altogether incredible and absurd. At that period, the anatomists of the human heart seemed not to have described, if indeed they had detected, that hieropathic affection so familiarly known among ourselves, of which the female spirit is the seat, and the ministers of religion the objects—a flame usually as pure as it is intense, and which burned as brightly in the soul of Matilda eight centuries ago, as in the most ardent of the fair bosoms which it warms and animates now.

She was in truth in love, but in love with the Papacy. Six aged Popes successively acknowledged and rejoiced over her, as at once the most zealous adherent of their cause, and the most devoted worshipper of their persons. And well might those holy fathers exult in such a conquest. Poets, in their dreams, have scarcely imaged, heroes, in the hour of their triumph, have rarely attained, so illustrious a trophy of their genius or of their valour.

The life of Matilda is told by Donnizone, a member of her household, in three books of lamentable hexameters; and by Fiorentini, an antiquary and genealogist of Lucca in the seventeenth century, in three other books scarcely less wearisome; though his learning, his love of truth, and his zeal for the glory of his heroine, secure for him the respect and the sympathy of his readers. That she should have inspired no nobler eulogies than theirs, may be ascribed partly to her having lived in the times when the Boethian had subsided into the Bœotian age of Italian literature, and partly to the uninviting nature of the ecclesiastical feuds and alliances in which her days were consumed. Otherwise, neither Zenobia, nor Isabella, nor Elizabeth, had a fairer claim to inspire, and to live in immortal verse. Not even her somnolent chaplain, as he beat out his Latin doggerel, could avoid giving utterance to the delight with which her delicate features, beaming with habitual gaiety, had inspired him. Not even her severe confessor, Saint Anselm of Lucca, could record without astonishment, how her feeble frame sustained all the burdens of civil government, and all the fatigues of actual war; burdens indeed, which, but for a series of miraculous cures wrought for her at his own intercession, she could not (he assures us) have sustained at all.

Supported either by miracle, or by her own indomitable spirit, Matilda wielded the sword of justice with masculine energy both in the field, against the enemies of the Holy See, and in the tribunal, against such as presumed to violate her laws. He who knew her best, regarded these stern exercises of her authority but as the promptings of a heart which loved too wisely and too well to love with fondness. In the camp, such was the serenity of her demeanour, and the graceful flow of her discourse, that she appeared to him a messenger of mercy, in the garb of a Penthiselea. On the judgment-seat he saw in her not the stern avenger of crime, but rather the compassionate mother of the feeble and the oppressed.

Nor did she allow to herself any of the weak indulgence she denied to others. In a voluptuous age she lived austere, subduing her appetites, and torturing her natural affections with the perverse ingenuity which her ghostly councillors inculcated and extolled. In a superstitious age she subdued her desire for the



devotional abstractions of the cloister; and with greater wisdom, and more real piety, consecrated herself to the active duties of her princely office. In an illiterate age, her habits of study were such that she could make herself intelligible to all the troops among whom she lived, though levied from almost every part of Europe, and especially to her Italian, French, and German soldiers, whose tongues she used with equal facility. Donnizone assures us, that, though he was ever at hand as her Latin secretary, she wrote with her own pen all her letters in that language to the Pontiffs and Sovereigns of her times — a proof, as his readers will think, of her discernment no less than of her learning. On his testimony, also, may be claimed for her the praise of loving, collecting, and preserving books; for thus he sings:—

‘Copia librorum non deficit huic, ve bonorum;  
Libros ex cunctis habet artibus atque figuris.’

How well she understood the right use of them, may be inferred from her employment of Werner, a jurist, to revise the ‘*Corpus Juris Civilis* ;’ and of Anselm, her confessor, to compile a collection of the Canon Law, and to write a commentary on the Psalms of David. Such, indeed, was her proficiency in scriptural knowledge, that her versifying chaplain maintains her equality in such studies with the most learned of the Bishops, her contemporaries.

Warrior, ascetic, and scholar as she was, the spirit of Matilda was too generous to be imprisoned within the limits of the camp, the cell, or the library. It was her nobler ambition to be the refuge of the oppressed, the benefactor of the miserable, and the champion of what she deemed the cause of truth. Mortifying the love of this world’s glory, she laboured with a happy inconsistency, to render it still more glorious. At her bidding, castles and palaces, convents and cathedrals, statues and public monuments, arose throughout Tuscany. Yet, so well was her munificence sustained by a wise economy, that to the close of her long reign, she was still able to maintain her hereditary title to the appellation of ‘the rich,’ by which her father, Boniface, had been also distinguished. She might, with no less propriety, have been designated as ‘the powerful;’ since, either by direct authority, or by irresistible influence, she ruled nearly the whole of Northern Italy, from Lombardy to the Papal States, and received from the other monarchs of the West, both the outward homage, and the real deference, reserved for sovereign potentates.

Matilda attained to the plenary dominion over her hereditary states at the very crisis of the great controversy of her age, when Henry had procured, and promulgated, the sentence of the Synod

of Worms for the deposition of Gregory. Heedless, or rather unconscious, of the resources of that formidable adversary, he had made no preparation for the inevitable contest; but, as though smitten by a judicial blindness, selected that critical moment for a new outrage on the most sacred feelings of his own subjects. He marched into Saxony; and there, as if in scorn of the free German spirit, erected a stern military despotism, confiscated the estates of the people, exiled their nobles, imprisoned their bishops, sold the peasants as slaves, or compelled them to labour in erecting fortresses, from which his mercenary troops might curb and ravage the surrounding country. The cry of the oppressed rose on every side from the unhappy land. It entered into the ears of the Avenger.

As Henry returned from this disastrous triumph to Utrecht, the Imperial banner floated over a vast assemblage of courtiers, churchmen, vassals, ministers of justice, men-at-arms, and sutlers, who lay encamped like some normad tribe round their chief; when the indignant bearing of some of his followers, and the alarmed and half-averted gaze of others, disclosed to him the awful fact that a pontifical anathema had cast him down from his Imperial state, and exiled him from the society of all Christian people. His heart fainted within him at these dismal tidings as at the sound of his own passing bell. But that heart was kingly still, and resolute either to dare or to endure, in defence of his hereditary crown. Shame and sorrow might track him to the grave, but he would hold no council with despair. The world had rejected him—the Church had cast him out—his very mother had deserted him. In popular belief, perhaps in his own, God Himself had abandoned him. Yet all was not lost. He retained, at least, the hope of vengeance. On his hated adversary he might yet retaliate blow for blow, and malediction for malediction.

On Easter-day, in the year 1076, surrounded by a small and anxious circle of prelates, William the Archbishop of Utrecht ascended his archiepiscopal throne, and recited the sacred narrative which commemorates the rising of the Redeemer from the grave. But no strain of exulting gratitude followed. A fierce invective depicted, in the darkest colours, the character and the career of Hildebrand, and with bitter scorn the preacher denied the right of such a Pope to censure the Emperor of the West, to govern the Church, or to live in her communion. In the name of the assembled Synod, he then pronounced him excommunicate.

At that moment the summons of death reached the author of this daring defiance. While the last fatal struggle convulsed his body, a yet sorer agony affected his soul. He died self-aborred,

rejecting the sympathy, the prayers, and the sacraments with which the terrified bystanders would have soothed his departing spirit. The voice of heaven itself seemed to rise in wild concert with the cry of his tortured conscience. Thunderbolts struck down both the church in which he had abjured the Vicar of Christ, and the adjacent palace in which the Emperor was residing. Three other of the anti-papal prelates quickly followed William to the grave, by strange and violent deaths. Godfrey of Lorraine fell by the hand of an assassin. These facts, though recorded by the contemporary chroniclers, will of course be received in our own times with the judicious scepticism which has been so deeply impressed on all modern readers of historical marvels. But there can be no doubt that the belief in these accumulated portents was everywhere diffused and awakened universal horror. Each day announced to Henry some new secession. His guards deserted his standard; his personal attendants avoided his presence. The members of the Synod of Worms fled to Rome, to make their peace with the justly-irritated Pontiff. The nobles set free the Saxon prisoners who had been confided to their custody. Otho appeared once more in arms to lead a new insurrection of his fellow-countrymen. The great Princes of Germany convened a council to deliberate on the deposition of their Sovereign. To every eye but his own, all seemed to be lost. Even to him it was but too evident that the loyalty of his subjects had been undermined, and that his throne was tottering beneath him. A single resource remained. He might yet assemble the faithful, or the desperate, adherents of his cause—inspire dread into those whose allegiance he had forfeited—make one last strenuous effort in defence of his crown—and descend to the tomb, if so it must be, the anointed chief of the Carolingian Empire.

With a mind wrought up to such resolves, he traversed the north of Germany to encounter the Saxon insurgents—published to the world the sentence of Utrecht—and called on the Lombard Bishops to concur in the excommunication it denounced. He reaped the usual reward of audacity. Though repelled by Otho, and compelled to retrace his march to the Rhine, he found every city, village, and convent, by which he passed, distracted with the controversy between the Diadem and the Tiara. Religion and awakening loyalty divided the Empire. Though not yet combining into any definite form, the elements of a new confederacy were evidently at work in favour of a Monarch who thus knew how to draw courage and energy from despair.

Yet the moral sentiment of the German people was as yet unequivocally against their Sovereign. The Imperialists mournfully

acknowledged that their chief was justly condemned. The Papalists indignantly denied the truth of the reproaches cast on their leader. In support of that denial, Gregory defended himself in epistles addressed to all the greater Teutonic prelates. Among them is a letter to Herman, Bishop of Mentz, which vividly exhibits both the strength of the writer's character and the weakness of his cause. Although (he says) such as, from their exceeding folly, deny the papal right of excommunicating kings, hardly deserve an answer, (the right to *depose* kings was the real point in debate,) yet, in condescension to their weakness, he will dispel their doubts. Peter himself had taught this doctrine, as appeared by a letter from St. Clement (in the authenticity of which no one believes). When Pepin coveted the crown of Childeric, Pope Zachary was invited, by the Mayor of the Palace, to give judgment between them. On his ambiguous award the usurper had founded the title of his dynasty. Saint Gregory the Great had *threatened* to depose *any* monarch who should resist his decrees. The story of Ambrose and Theodosius, rightly interpreted, gave proof that the Emperor held his crown at the will of the Apostle. Every king was one of the "sheep" whom Peter had been commanded to feed, and one of the "things" which Peter had been empowered to bind. Who could presume to place the Sceptre on a level with the Crosier, the one the conquest of human pride, the other the gift of divine mercy: the one conducting to the vain glories of earth, the other pointing the way to Heaven? As gold surpasses lead, so does the Episcopal transcend the Imperial dignity. Could Henry justly refuse to the universal Bishop that precedence which Constantine had yielded to the meanest Prelate at Nicæa? Must not he be supreme above all terrestrial thrones, to whom all ecclesiastical dominations are subordinate?

To employ good arguments, one must be in the right. To make the best possible use of such as are to be had is the privilege of genius, even when in the wrong. Nothing could be more convincing to the spiritual lords of Germany, nothing more welcome to her secular chiefs, than this array of great names and sonorous authorities against their falling Sovereign. To overcome the obstinate loyalty of the burghers and peasantry to their young and gallant King, religious terrors were indispensable; and continual reinforcements of pontifical denunciations were therefore solicited and obtained. At length, in the autumn of 1076, appeared from Rome a rescript which, in the event (no longer doubtful) of Henry's continued resistance to the sentence of the last papal council, required the German princes and prelates, counts and barons, to elect a new Emperor, and assured them of the Apos-



tolical confirmation of any choice which should be worthily made. These were no idle words. The death-struggle could no longer be postponed. Legates arrived from Rome to guide the proceedings of the Diet to be convened for this momentous deliberation. It met during the autumn at Tribur.

The annals of mankind scarcely record so solemn, or so dispassionate, an act of national justice. Some princely banner waved over every adjacent height, and groups of unarmed soldiers might be traced along the furthest windings of the neighbouring Rhine, joining in the pleasant toils, and swelling the gay carols, of the mature vintage. In the centre, and under the defence, of that vast encampment, rose a pavilion, within which were collected all whose dignity entitled them to a voice in that high debate. From the only extant record of what occurred, and of what was spoken there, it may be inferred that Henry's offences against the Church were regarded lightly in comparison with the criminality of his civil government. Stationed on the opposite bank of the river, he received quick intelligence of the progress and tendency of the discussion. The prospect darkened hourly. Soldiers had already been despatched to secure him; and his person was in danger of unknighly indignities; which might for ever have estranged the reverence borne to him by the ruder multitude, when he attempted to avert the impending sentence of deposition by an offer to abdicate all the powers of government to his greater feudatories, stipulating for himself only that he should retain his Imperial title as the nominal head of the Teutonic Empire.

Palpable as was the snare to the subtle Italian legates, the simple-minded Germans appear to have nearly fallen into it. For seven successive days, speech answered speech on this proposal, and when men could neither speak nor listen more, the project of a nominal reign, shorn of all substantial authority, was adopted by the Diet; but (in modern phrase) with amendments obviously imposed by the representatives of the sacerdotal power. The Pope was to be invited to hold a Diet at Augsburg in the ensuing spring. He was meanwhile to decide whether Henry should be restored to the bosom of the Church. If so restored, he was at once to resume all his imperial rights. But if the sun should go down on him, still an excommunicate person, on the 23rd of February, 1077, his crown was to be transferred to another. Till then he was to dwell at Spire, with the title of Emperor, but without a court, an army, or a place of public worship.

The theocratic theory, hitherto regarded as a mere Utopian extravagance, had thus passed into a practical and sacred reality. The fisherman of Galilee had triumphed over the conqueror of

Pharsalia. The vassal of Otho had reduced Otho's successor to vassalage. The universal monarchy which Heathen Rome had wrung from a bleeding world, had been extorted by Christian Rome from the superstition or the reverence of mankind. The relation of the Papacy and the Empire had been inverted; and Churchmen foretold with unhesitating confidence the exaltation of their order above all earthly potentates, and the resort to their capital of countless worshippers, there to do homage to an oracle more profound than that of Delphi, to mysteries more pure than those of Eleusis, and to a pontificate more august than that of Jerusalem. Strains of unbounded joy resounded through the papal city. Solitude and shame and penitential exercises attested the past crimes, and the abject fortunes, of the exile of Spires.

But against this regimen of sackcloth and fasting, the body and the soul of Henry revolted. At the close of the Diet of Tribur, he had scarcely completed his twenty-sixth year. Degraded, if not finally deposed, hated and reviled, abandoned by man, and compelled by conscience to anticipate his abandonment by God, he yet, in the depths of his misery, retained the remembrance and the hope of dominion. The future was still bright with the anticipations of youth. He might yet retrieve his reputation, resume the blessings he had squandered, and take a signal vengeance on his great antagonist. And amidst the otherwise universal desertion, there remained one faithful bosom on which to repose his own aching heart. Bertha, his wife, who had retained her purity unsullied amidst the license of his court, now retained her fidelity unshaken amidst the falsehood of his adherents. Her wrongs had been such as to render a deep resentment nothing less than a duty. Her happiness and her honour had been basely assailed by the selfish profligate to whom the most solemn vows had in vain united her. But to her, those vows were a bond stronger than death, and indissoluble by all the confederate powers of earth and hell. To suffer was the condition—to pardon and to love, the necessity—of her existence. Vice and folly could not have altogether depraved him who was the object of such inalienable tenderness, and who at length learnt to return it with a devotion almost equal to her own, after a bitter experience had taught him the real value of the homage and caresses of the world.

In her society, though an exile from every other, Henry wore away two months at Spires in a fruitless solicitation to the Pope to receive him in Italy as a penitent suitor for reconciliation with the Church. December had now arrived; and, in less than ten weeks, would be fulfilled the term, when, if still excommunicate, he must, according to the sentence of Tribur, finally resign, not the prerog-



atives alone, but with them the title and rank of Head of the Empire. No sacrifices seemed too great to avert this danger; and history tells of none more singular than those to which the heir of the Franconian dynasty was constrained to submit. In the garb of a pilgrim, and in a season so severe as, during more than four months, to have converted the Rhine into a solid mass of ice, Henry and his faithful Bertha, carrying in her arms their infant child, undertook to cross the Alps, with no escort but such menial servants as it was yet in his power to hire for that desperate enterprise. Among the courtiers who had so lately thronged his palace, not one would become the companion of his toil and dangers. Among the neighbouring princes who had so lately solicited his alliance, not one would grant him the poor boon of a safe-conduct and a free passage through their states. Even his wife's mother exacted from him large territorial cessions as the price of allowing him, and her own daughter, to scale one of the Alpine passes; apparently that of the Great St. Bernard. Day by day, peasants cut out an upward path through the long windings of the mountain. In the descent from the highest summit, when thus at length gained, Henry had to encounter fatigues and dangers from which the chamois-hunter would have turned aside. Vast trackless wastes of snow were traversed, sometimes by mere crawling, at other times by the aid of rope-ladders, or still ruder contrivances, and not seldom by a sheer plunge along the inclined steep; the Empress and her child being enveloped, on those occasions, in the raw skins of beasts slaughtered on the march.

The transition from these dangers to security, from the pine forests, glaciers, and precipices of the Alps, to the sunny plains of Italy, was not so grateful to the wearied travellers as the change from the gloom of Spires to the rapturous greetings which hailed their advance along the course of the Po. A splendid court, a numerous army, and an exulting populace, once more attested the majesty of the Emperor; nor was the welcome of his Italian subjects destitute of a deeper significance than usually belongs to the pæans of the worshippers of kings. They dreamed of the haughty Pontiff humbled, of the see of Ambrose exalted to civil and ecclesiastical supremacy, and of the German yoke lifted from their necks. Doomed as were these soaring hopes to an early disappointment, the enthusiasm of Henry's partisans justified those more sober expectations which had prompted his perilous journey across the Alps. He could now prosecute his suit to the Pope with the countenance, and in the vicinity of those zealous adherents, and at a secure distance from the enemies towards whom Hildebrand was already advancing to hold the contemplated Diet of Augsburg.

In the personal command of a military escort, Matilda attended the Papal progress; and was even pointing out to her guards their line of march through the snowy peaks which closed in her northern horizon, when tidings of the rapid approach of the Emperor at the head of a formidable force induced her to retreat to the fortress of Canossa. There, in the bosom of the Apennines, her sacred charge would be secure from any sudden assault; nor had she anything to dread from the regular leaguer of such powers as could, in that age, have been brought to the siege of it.

Canossa was the cradle and the original seat of her ancient race. It was also the favourite residence of the Great Countess; and when Gregory found shelter within her halls, they were crowded with guests of the highest eminence in social and in literary rank. So imposing was the scene, and so superb the assemblage, that the drowsy muse of her versifying chaplain awakened for once to an hyperbole, and declared Canossa to be nothing less than a new Rome, the rival of that of Romulus. Thither, as if to verify the boast, came a long line of mitred penitents from Germany, whom the severe Hildebrand consigned on their arrival to solitary cells with bread and water for their fare; and there also appeared the German Emperor himself, not the leader of the rumoured host of Lombard invaders, but surrounded by a small and unarmed retinue—mean in his apparel, and contrite in outward aspect, a humble suppliant for pardon and acceptance to the communion of the faithful. Long centuries had passed away since the sceptre of the West had been won by Italian armies in Italian fields, and Henry declined to put the issue of this great contest on the swords of his Milanese vassals. He well knew that, to break the alliance of patriotism, cupidity, and superstition, which had degraded him at Tribur, it was necessary to rescue himself from the anathema which he had but too justly incurred, and that his crown must be redeemed, not by force, but by submission to his formidable antagonist. And Hildebrand! fathomless as are the depths of the human heart, who can doubt that, amidst the conflict of emotions which now agitated him, the most dominant was the exulting sense of victory over the earth's greatest Monarch. His rival at his feet, his calumniator self-condemned, the lips which had rudely summoned him to abdicate the Apostolic crown now suing to him for the recovery of the Imperial diadem, the exaltation in his person of decrepit age over fiery youth, of mental over physical power, of the long-enthralled Church over the long-tyrannising world, all combined to form a triumph too intoxicating even for that capacious intellect.

The veriest sycophant of the Papal Court, even in that superstitious age, would scarcely have ventured to describe, as a serious act of sacramental devotion, the religious masquerade which followed between the high priest and the imperial penitent; or to extol as politic and wise, the base indignities to which the Pontiff subjected his prostrate enemy, and of which his own pastoral letters contained the otherwise incredible record. Had it been his object to compel Henry to drain to its bitterest dregs the cup of unprofitable humiliation — to exasperate to madness the Emperor himself, and all who would resent as a personal wrong an insult to the sovereign — and to transmit to the latest age a monument and a hatred alike imperishable, of the extravagances of spiritual despotism, — he could have devised no fitter course.

Environed by many of the greatest Princes of Italy who owed fealty and allegiance to the Emperor, Gregory affected to turn a deaf ear to his solicitations. His humblest offers were spurned; his most unbounded acknowledgments of the sacerdotal authority over the kings and kingdoms of the world were rejected. For the distress of her royal kinsman, Matilda felt as women and as monarchs feel; but even her entreaties seemed to be fruitless. Day by day, the same cold stern appeal to the future decisions of the Diet to be convened at Augsburg, repelled the suit even of that powerful intercessor. The critical point, at which prayers for reconciliation would give way to indignation and defiance, had been almost reached. Then, and not till then, the Pope condescended to offer his ghostly pardon, on the condition that Henry would surrender into his hands the custody of the crown, the sceptre, and the other ensigns of royalty, and acknowledge himself unworthy to bear the royal title. This, however, was a scandal on which not even the proud spirit of the now triumphant priest dared to insist, and to which not even the now abject heart of the Emperor could be induced to submit. But the shame which was spared to the Sovereign, was inflicted with relentless severity on the Man.

It was towards the end of January. The earth was covered with snow, and the mountain streams were arrested by the keen frost of the Apennines, when, clad in a thin penitential garment of white linen, and bare of foot, Henry, the descendant of so many kings, and the ruler of so many nations, ascended slowly and alone the rocky path which led to the outer gate of the fortress of Canossa. With strange emotions of pity, of wonder, and of scorn, the assembled crowd gazed on his majestic form and noble features, as, passing through the first and the second gateway, he stood in the posture of humiliation before the third, which remained inexorably closed against his further progress. The rising

sun found him there fasting ; and there the setting sun left him stiff with cold, faint with hunger, and devoured by shame and ill-suppressed resentment. A second day dawned, and wore tardily away, and closed, in a continuance of the same indignities, poured out on Europe at large in the person of her chief, by the Vicar of the meek, the lowly, and the compassionate Redeemer. A third day came, and, still irreverently trampling on the hereditary lord of the fairer half of the civilised world, Hildebrand once more compelled him to prolong till nightfall this profane and hollow parody on the real workings of the broken and contrite heart.

Nor was he unwarned of the activity and the strength of the indignation aroused by this protracted outrage on every natural sentiment, and every honest prejudice, of mankind. Lamentations and reproaches rang through the castle of Canossa. Murmurs from Henry's inveterate enemies, and his own zealous adherents, upbraided Gregory as exhibiting rather the cruelty of a tyrant, than the rigour of an apostle. But the endurance of the sufferer was the only measure of the inflexibility of the tormentor ; nor was it till the unhappy monarch had burst away from the scene of his mental and bodily anguish, and sought shelter in a neighbouring convent, that the Pope, yielding at length to the instances of Matilda, would admit the degraded suppliant into his presence. It was the fourth day on which he had borne the humiliating garb of an affected penitent, and, in that sordid raiment he drew near on his bare feet to the more than imperial Majesty of the Church, and prostrated himself, in more than servile deference, before the diminutive and emaciated old man, "from the terrible glance of whose countenance," we are told, "the eye of every beholder recoiled as from the lightning." Hunger, cold, nakedness, and shame had, for the moment, crushed the gallant spirit of the sufferer. He wept and cried for mercy, again and again renewing his entreaties, until he had reached the lowest level of abasement to which his own enfeebled heart, or the haughtiness of his great antagonist, could depress him. Then, and not till then, did the Pope condescend to revoke the anathema of the Vatican.

Cruel, however, were the tender mercies of the now exulting Pontiff. He restored his fallen enemy at once to the communion, and to the contempt, of his Christian brethren. The price of pardon was a promise to submit himself to the future judgment of the Apostolic See ; to resign his crown if that judgment should be unfavourable to him ; to abstain meanwhile from the enjoyment of any of his royal prerogatives or revenues ; to acknowledge that his subjects had been lawfully released from their allegiance ; to banish his former friends and advisers ; to govern his states, should



he regain them, in obedience to the papal counsels; to enforce all papal decrees; and never to revenge his present humiliation. To the observance of the terms thus dictated by the conqueror, the oaths of Henry himself, and of several Prelates and Princes as his sponsors, were pledged; and then, in the name of Him who had declared that His kingdom was not of this world, and as the successor of Him who had forbidden to all Bishops any lordship over the heritage of Christ, the solemn words of pontifical absolution rescued the degraded Emperor from the forfeit to which he had been conditionally sentenced by the confederates at Tribur.

Another expiation was yet to be made to the injured majesty of the Tiara. He in whom the dynasties of Cæsar, of Charlemagne, and of Otho had their representative, might still be compelled to endure one last and galling contumely. Holding in his hand the seeming bread, which (as he believed) words of far more than miraculous power had just transmuted into the very body which died and was entombed at Calvary—"Behold!" exclaimed the Pontiff, fixing his keen and flashing eye on the jaded countenance of the unhappy Monarch, "behold the body of the Lord! Be it this day the witness of my innocence. May the Almighty God now free me from the suspicion of the guilt of which I have been accused by thee and thine, if I be really innocent! May He this very day smite me with a sudden death, if I be really guilty!" Amidst the acclamations of the bystanders, he then looked up to heaven, and broke and ate the consecrated element. "And now," he exclaimed, turning once more on the awe-stricken Henry that eye which neither age could dim nor pity soften; "if thou art conscious of thine innocence, and assured that the charges brought against thee by thine own opponents are false and calumnious, free the Church of God from scandal, and thyself from suspicion, and take as an appeal to heaven this body of the Lord."

That, in open contradiction to his own recent prayers and penances, the penitent should have accepted this insulting challenge, was obviously impossible. He trembled, and evaded it. At length when his wounded spirit, and half-lifeless frame, could endure no more, a banquet was served, where, suppressing the agonies of shame and rage with which his bosom was to heave from that moment to his last, he closed this scene of wretchedness, by accepting the hospitalities, sharing in the familiar discourse, and submitting to the benedictions, of the man who had in his person given proofs, till then unimagined, of the depths of ignominy to which the Temporal chief of Christendom might be depressed by an audacious use of the powers of her Ecclesiastical head.



The Lombard lords who had hailed the arrival of their Sovereign in Italy, had gradually overtaken his rapid advance to Canossa. There, marshalled in the adjacent valleys, they anxiously awaited, from day to day, intelligence of what might be passing within the fortress, when at length the gates were thrown open, and, attended only by the usual episcopal retinue, a bishop was seen to descend from the steep path which led to their encampment. He announced that Henry had submitted himself to the present discipline and to the future guidance of the Pope, and had received his ghostly absolution; and that on the same terms his Holiness was ready to bestow the same grace on his less guilty followers. As the tidings of this papal victory flew from rank to rank, the mountains echoed with one protracted shout of indignation and defiance. The Lombards spurned the pardon of Hildebrand—an usurper of the Apostolic throne, himself excommunicated by the decrees of German and Italian Synods. They denied the authority of the Emperor, debased as he now was by concessions unworthy of a king, and by indignities disgraceful to a soldier. They vowed to take the crown from his dishonoured head, to place it on the brows of his son, the yet infant, Conrad; to march immediately to Rome, and there to depose the proud Churchman who had thus dared to humble to the dust the majesty of the Franconian line, and of the Lombard name.

In the midst of this military tumult, the gates of Canossa were again thrown open, and Henry himself was seen descending to the camp, his noble figure bowed down, and his lordly countenance overcast with unwonted emotions. As he passed along the Lombard lines, every eye expressed contempt, and derision was on every tongue. But the Italian was not the German spirit. They could at once despise and obey. Following the standard of their degraded monarch, they conducted him to Reggio, where, in a conclave of ecclesiastics, he instantly proceeded to concert schemes for their deliverance, and for his own revenge.

Within a single week from the absolution of Canossa, Gregory was on his way to Mantua to hold a council, to which the Emperor had invited him, with the treacherous design (if the papal historians may be credited) of seizing and imprisoning him there. The vigilance of Matilda rescued her Holy Father from the real or imaginary danger. From the banks of the Po she conducted him back, under the escort of her troops, to the shelter of her native mountain fastness. His faith in his own infallibility must have undergone a severe trial. The Imperial sinner he had pardoned was giving daily proof that the heart of man is not to be penetrated even by Papal eyes. Henry was exercising, with ostentation, the

prerogatives he had so lately vowed to forego. He had cast off the abject tone of the confessional. All his royal instincts were in full activity. He breathed defiance against the Pontiff—seized and imprisoned his legates—recalled to his presence his excommunicated councillors—became once more strenuous for his rights—and was recompensed by one simultaneous burst of sympathy, enthusiasm, and devotedness, from his Italian subjects.

To balance the ominous power thus rising against him, Gregory now received an accession of dignity and of influence on which his eulogists are unwilling to dwell. The discipline of the Church, and the fate of the Empire, were not the only subjects of his solicitude while sheltered in the castle and city of the Tuscan heroine. The world was startled and scandalised by the intelligence, that his princely hostess had granted all her hereditary states to her Apostolic guest, and to his successors for ever, in full allodial dominion. By some sage of the law, who drew up the act of cession, it is ascribed to her dread of the Emperor's hostility. A nobler impulse is ascribed to the mistress of Liguria and Tuscany, in the hobbling verses of her more honest chaplain. Peter, he says, bore the keys of heaven, and Matilda had resolved to bear the Etrurian keys of Peter's patrimony, in no other character than that of doorkeeper to Peter. With what benignity the splendid inheritance was accepted, may also be learned from the worthy versifier. At this hour Pope Gregory the Sixteenth holds some parts of his territorial dominion in virtue of this grant. Hildebrand is one of the saints of the Church, and one of the heroes of the world. He, therefore, escapes the reproach of so grave an abuse of the hospitality of the Great Countess, and of the confidence she reposed in her spiritual guide. The coarser reproach in which it has involved them both will be adopted by no one who has ever watched the weaving of the mystic bonds which knit together the female and the sacerdotal hearts. It was the age of feudalism, not of chivalry. Yet when chivalry came, and St. Louis himself adorned it, would he, if so tried, have resisted the temptation under which St. Gregory fell? It is, probably, well for the fame of that illustrious prince that his virtue was never subjected to so severe a test.

Canossa, the scene of this memorable cession, was, at the same time, the prison of him to whom it was made. All the passes were beset with Henry's troops. All the Lombard and Tuscan cities were in Henry's possession. His reviving courage had kindled the zeal of his adherents. He was no longer an outcast to be trampled down with impunity; but the leader of a formidable host, with whom even the Vicar of Christ must condescend to temporise.

In the wild defiles of the Alps, swift messengers from the Princes

to the Pope hurried past solemn legates from the Pope to the Princes — they urging his instant appearance at Augsburg — he exhorting them to avoid any decision in his absence. Mitred emissaries also passed from Gregory to the Emperor, summoning him to attend the Diet within a time by which no one unwafted by wings or steam could have reached the place, and requesting from him a suicidal safe-conduct for his pontifical judge. The Pope was now confined to the weapons with which men of the gown contend with men of the sword. His prescience foreboded a civil war. His policy was to assume the guidance of the German league just far enough to maintain his lofty claims, not far enough to be irrevocably committed to the leaguers. A plausible apology for his absence was necessary. It was afforded by Henry's rejection of demands which were made only that they might be rejected.

To Otho and to the aspiring Rudolf such subtleties were alike unfamiliar and unsuspected. Those stout soldiers and simple Germans knew that the Pope had deposed their King, and had absolved them from their allegiance. They doubted not, therefore, that he was bound heart and soul to their cause. Or if, in the assembly which they held at Forcheim, a doubt was whispered of Italian honour or of Pontifical faith, it was silenced by the presence there of Papal legates, who sedulously swelled the tide of invective against Henry. At first, indeed, they dissuaded the immediate choice of a rival sovereign. But to the demand of the Princes for prompt and decisive measures, they gave their ready assent. They advised them, it is true, to confer no hereditary title on the object of their choice. Yet when, in defiance of that advice, the choice was made, they solemnly confirmed it in the name, and by the authority, of Gregory. They did not, certainly, vote for the election of Rudolf; but, when the shouts of the multitude announced his accession to the Teutonic throne, they placed the crown on his head. That Hildebrand did not disavow these acts of his representatives, but availed himself of the alliances and aids to be derived from them, appeared to these downright captains abundantly sufficient to bind him in conscience and in honour. That the Pope had not the slightest intention of being so bound, unless it should chance to suit his own convenience, is, however, past dispute. Even in the nineteenth century he has found, in M. l'Abbé Jager, an apologist who absolves him from all responsibility for the acts of his legates at the Diet of Forcheim, because they were adopted without awaiting his own personal arrival. The Diet might just as reasonably have awaited the arrival of the Millennium.

The decretals of Rome, of Tribur, of Canossa, and of Forcheim,

were now to bear their proper fruits—fruits of bitter taste, and of evil augury. At the moment when the cathedral of Mentz was pouring forth the crowds who had just listened to the coronation oath of Rudolf, the clash of arms, the cries of combatants, and the shrieks of the dying, mingled, strangely and mournfully, with the sacred anthems and the songs of revellers. An idle frolic of some Swabian soldiers had kindled into rage the sullen spirit with which the partisans of Henry had gazed on that unwelcome pageant; and the first rude and exasperated voice was echoed by thousands who learned, from those acclamations, the secret of their numbers and their strength. The discovery and the agitation spread from city to city, and roused the whole German people from the Rhine to the Oder. Men's hearts yearned over their exiled king. They remembered that, but twelve short years before, he had been basely stolen from his mother by churchmen, who had yet more basely corrupted him. They commemorated his courage, his courtesy, and his munificence. They pardoned his faults as the excesses of youth, and resented, as insults to themselves, the indignities of Canossa, and the treason of Forcheim. In this reflux of public opinion, the loyal and the brave, all who cherished the honours of the crown, and all who desired the independence of the state, were supported by the multitudes to whom the papal edicts against simony and clerical marriages were fraught with disaster, and by that still more numerous body who, at all times, lend their voices and their arms to swell the triumph of every rising cause. To this confederacy Rudolf had to oppose the alliance of the princes, secular and ecclesiastical, the devoted zeal of the Saxon people, and the secret support, rather than the frank and open countenance of the Pope. The shock of these hostile powers was near and inevitable.

In the spring of 1077, tidings were spread throughout Germany of the Emperor's arrival to the northward of the Alps. From Franconia, the seat of his house, from the fruitful province of Burgundy, and from the Bohemian mountains, he was greeted with an enthusiastic welcome. Many even of the Bavarians and Swabians revolted in his favour. His standard once more floated over all the greater citadels of the Rhine. He who, six months before, had fled from Spire a solitary wanderer, was now at the head of a powerful army, controlling the whole of Southern Germany, laying waste the territories of his rivals, and threatening them with a signal retribution.

Amidst the rising tempest the voice of Gregory was heard; but it was no longer trumpet-tongued and battling with the storm. The supreme earthly judge, the dread avenger, had subsided into



the pacific mediator. In the name of Peter he enjoined either king to send him a safe-conduct, that he might, in person, arbitrate between them and stop the effusion of Christian blood. A safe but an impracticable offer; an indirect but significant avowal of neutrality between the sovereign he had so lately deposed and the sovereign whom, by his legates, he had so lately crowned! Thus ignobly withdrawing from the contest he had kindled, Hildebrand returned from Canossa to the papal city. The Great Countess, as usual, attended as the commander of his guard. Rome received in triumph her new Germanicus, and decreed an ovation to his ever faithful Agrippina.

While the glories of Canossa were thus celebrated by rejoicings in the Christian capital, they were expiated by blood in the plains of Saxony. Confiding in the solemn acts of the Pope and his legates, the Saxons had thronged to the defence of the crown of Rudolf, and they had sustained it undauntedly. But the bravest quailed at the intelligence that Gregory had disowned the cause of the Church and of their native land; and that, even in the palace of the Lateran, the ambassadors of Henry were received with honours, and with a deference denied to the humbler envoys of his rival. Sagacity far inferior to that of Hildebrand could, at that time, have divined that the sword alone could decide such a quarrel—that the sword of Henry was the keener of the two—and that, by the cordial adoption of the cause of either, the Pope might draw on himself the vengeance of the conqueror. To pause, to vacillate, and to soothe, had therefore become the policy of the sovereign of the papal states; but to be silent or inactive in such a strife would have been to abdicate one of the highest prerogatives of the Papacy. Pontifical legates traversed Europe. Pontifical epistles demanded the submission of the combatants. Pontifical warning denounced woes on the disobedient. But no pontifical voice explained who was to be obeyed or who opposed, what was to be done or what forborne. Discerning readers of these mandates understood them as an intimation that, on the victorious side (whichever that side might be) the pontifical power would ultimately be found.

The appeal from these dark oracles to the unambiguous sword was first made by the rival kings in the autumn of 1078. They met on the banks of the Stren, on the plains of Melrichstadt. Each was driven from the field with enormous loss; Henry by his inveterate antagonist Otho; Rudolf by Count Herbard, the lieutenant of Henry. Each claimed the victory. An issue so undecided could draw from the circumspect Pontiff nothing more definite than renewed exhortations to rely on the Holy Peter; and



could urge him to no measure more hazardous than that of convening a new Council at the Lateran. There appeared the Imperial envoys with hollow vows of obedience, and Saxon messengers invoking some intelligible intimation of the judgment and purposes of the Apostolic See. Again the Pope listened, spoke, exhorted, threatened; and left the bleeding world to interpret as it might the mystic sense of the Infallible.

To that brave and truth-loving people from whom, at the distance of four centuries, Luther was to rise for the deliverance of mankind, these subterfuges appeared in their real light. The Saxon annalist has preserved three letters sent by his countrymen on this occasion to Gregory, which he must have read with admiration and with shame. "You know, and the letters of your Holiness attest (such is their indignant remonstrance) that it was by no advice, nor for any interest of ours, but for wrongs done to the Holy See, that you deposed our king, and forbade us, under fearful menaces, to acknowledge him. We have obeyed you at great danger, and at the expense of horrible sufferings. Many of us have lost their property and their lives, and have bequeathed hopeless poverty to their children. We who survive are without the means of subsistence, delivered over to the utmost agonies of distress. The reward of our sacrifices is, that he who was compelled to cast himself at your feet has been absolved without punishment, and has been permitted to crush us to the very abyss of misery. After our king had been solemnly deposed in a Synod, and another chosen in virtue of the Apostolic authority, the very matter thus decided is again brought into question. What especially perplexes us simple folk is, that the legates of Henry, though excommunicated by your legates, are well received at Rome. Holy Father, your piety assures us that you are guided by honourable, not by subtle views; but we are too gross to understand them. We can only explain to you that this management of two parties has produced civil war, murder, pillage, conflagration. If we, helpless sheep! had failed in any point of duty, the vengeance of the Holy See would have overtaken us. Why exhibit so much forbearance when you have to do with wolves who have ravaged the Lord's fold? We conjure you to look into your own heart, to remember your own honour, to fear the wrath of God, and for your own sake, if not for love of us, rescue yourself from responsibility for the torrents of blood poured out in our land."

To these pathetic appeals Gregory answered slowly and reluctantly, by disavowing the acts of his legates at Forcheim; by extolling his own justice, courage, and disinterestedness; by invoking the support of all orders of men in Germany; and by

assuring them, in scriptural language, of the salvation of such "as should persevere to the end." But the hour for blandishments had passed away. The day of wrath, and the power of the sword, had come.

The snow covered the earth, and the frost had chained the rivers, when, in the winter of 1079-80, the armies of Henry and Rudolf were drawn up, in hostile lines, at the village of Fladenheim, near Mulhausen. Henry was the assailant, but Rudolf, though driven with great loss from the field, was the conqueror; for in that field the dreaded Otho again commanded, and by his skill and courage a rout was turned into a victory.

The intelligence arrived at Rome at the moment when Gregory was presiding there in the most numerous of the many councils he had convened at the Lateran. Long-suppressed shame for his ignoble indecision, the murmurs of the assembled prelates, a voice from Heaven audible, as we are told, to his sense alone, and above all the triumphant field of Fladenheim, combined to overcome his long-cherished but timid policy. Rising from his throne with the majesty of his earlier days, the Pope, in the names of Peter and of Paul, "of God, and of his holy mother Mary," excommunicated Henry, took from him the government of his states, deprived him of his royal rank, forbade all Christian people to receive him as their king, "gave, granted, and conceded" that Rudolf might rule the German and Italian Empire; and with blessings on Rudolf's adherents, and curses on his foes, dissolved the assembly. Then, moved, as he believed by a divine impulse, he proceeded to the altar, and uttered a prediction that ere the Church should celebrate the festival of the Prince of the Apostles, Henry, her rebellious outcast, should neither reign, nor live, to molest her.

A perilous prophecy! Henry was no longer the exile of Tribur, nor the penitent of Canossa. Yet his own rage, on hearing of this new papal sentence, did not burn so fiercely as the wrath of his adherents.

With the sanction of thirty bishops, a new Anti-Pope, Guibert of Ravenna, was elected at Brixen; and, at every court in Europe Imperial embassies demanded support for the common cause of all temporal sovereigns. In every part of Germany troops were levied, and Henry marched at their head to crush the one German power in alliance with Rome. But that power was still animated by the Saxon spirit, and was still sustained by the claims of Rudolf, and by the genius of Otho.

On the bright dawn of an autumnal day his forces, drawn up on the smiling banks of the Elster, raised the sacred song of the

Hebrews, — “God standeth in the congregation of princes; he is a judge among Gods;”—and flung themselves on the far-extended lines of Henry’s army; who, with emulous devotion, met them with the hardly less sublime canticle,—“Te Deum laudamus.” Cries more welcome to the demons of war soon stilled these sacred strains; cries of despair, of anguish, and of terror. They first rose from one of Henry’s squadrons, which, alarmed by the fall of their captain, receded; and, in their retreat, spread through the rest a panic, a pause, and a momentary confusion. That moment was enough for the eagle glance of Otho. He rushed on the wavering Imperialists; and, ere that bright sun had reached the meridian, thousands had fallen by the Saxon sword, or had perished in the blood-stained river. The victory was complete, the exultation rapturous. Shouts of glory to the God of battles, thanksgivings for the deliverance of Saxony, pæans of immortal honour to Otho, the noblest of her sons, soothed or exasperated the agonies of the dying; when the triumph was turned into sudden and irremediable mourning. On the field which had, apparently, secured his crown, Rudolf himself had fallen. He fell by an illustrious arm. Godfrey of Bouillon, the hero of the *Jerusalem Delivered*, struck the fatal blow. Another sword severed the right hand from the arm of Rudolf. “It is the hand,” he cried, as his glazing eye rested on it, “with which I confirmed my fealty to Henry my lord.” At once elevated by so signal a victory, and depressed by these penitent misgivings, his spirit passed away, leaving his adherents to the mercy of his rival.

The same sun which witnessed the ruin of Henry’s army on the Elster, looked down on a conflict, in which, on that eventful morning, the forces of Matilda, in the Mantuan territory, fled before his own. He now, once more, descended into Italy. He came, not, as formerly, a pilgrim and an exile; but at the head of an army devoted to his person, and defying all carnal enemies, and all spiritual censures. He came to encounter Hildebrand, destitute of all Transalpine alliances, and supported, even in Italy, by no power but that of Matilda; for the Norman Duke of Apulia was far away, attempting the conquest of the Eastern capital and Empire. But Henry left in his rear the invincible Saxons, and the hero who commanded them. To prevent a diversion in that quarter the Emperor proposed to abdicate his dominion in Saxony in favour of Conrad, his son. But Otho (a merry talker, as his annalist informs us) rejected the project with the remark, that “the calf of a vicious bull usually proved vicious.” Leaving, therefore, this implacable enemy to his machinations, the Emperor pressed forward; and before the summer of 1080, the citizens of Rome saw,

from their walls, the German standards in hostile array in the Campagna.

In the presence of such danger the gallant spirit of the aged Pope once more rose and exulted. He convened a Synod to attest his last defiance of his formidable enemy. He exhorted the German princes to elect a successor to Rudolf. In letters of impassioned eloquence, he again maintained his supremacy over all the kings and rulers of mankind. He welcomed persecution as the badge of his holy calling; and, while the besiegers were at the gates, he disposed (at least in words) of royal crowns, and distant provinces. Matilda supplied him with money, which, for a while, tranquillised the Roman populace. He himself, as we are assured, wrought miracles to extinguish conflagrations kindled by their treachery. In language such as martyrs use, he consoled the partners of his sufferings. In language such as heroes breathe, he animated the defenders of the city. The siege, or blockade, continued for three years uninterruptedly, except when Henry's troops were driven, by the deadly heats of autumn, to the neighbouring hills. Distress, and, it is alleged, bribery, at length subdued the courage of the garrison. On every side clamours were heard for peace; for Henry demanded, as the terms of peace, nothing more than the recognition of his Imperial title, and his coronation by the hands of Gregory. The conscience, perhaps the pride, of Gregory revolted against the proposal. His invincible will opposed and silenced the outcries of the famished multitudes; nor could their entreaties, or their threats, extort from him more than a promise that, in the approaching winter, he would propose the question to a Pontifical Synod. It met, by the permission of Henry, on the 30th of November, 1083. It was the latest council of Gregory's pontificate. A few bishops, faithful to their chief and to his cause, now occupied the seats so often thronged by mitred churchmen. Every pallid cheek and anxious eye was turned to him who occupied the loftier throne in the centre of that agitated assembly. He rose, and the half-uttered suggestions of fear and human policy were hushed into deep stillness as he spoke. He spoke of the glorious example, of the light affliction, and of the eternal reward, of martyrs for the faith. He spoke, as dying fathers speak to their children, of peace, and hope, and of consolation. But he spoke also, as inspired prophets spake of yore to the Kings of Israel, denouncing the swift vengeance of Heaven against his oppressor. The enraptured audience exclaimed that they had heard the voice of an angel, not of a man. Gregory dismissed the assembly, and calmly prepared for whatever extremity of distress might await him.



It did not linger. In the spring of 1084 the garrison was overpowered, the gates were thrown open to the besiegers, and Gregory sought a precarious refuge in the Castle of St. Angelo. He left the great Church of the Lateran as a theatre for the triumph of his antagonist and his rival. Seated on the Apostolic throne, Guibert, the Anti-Pope of Brixen, was consecrated there by the title of Clement the Third; and then, as the successor of Peter, he placed the crown of Germany and of Italy on the brows of Henry, and of Bertha, as they knelt before him.

And now Henry had, or seemed to have, in his grasp the author of the shame of Canossa, of the anathemas of the Lateran, and of the civil wars and rebellions of the Empire. The base populace of Rome were already anticipating, with sanguinary joy, the humiliation, perhaps the death, of the noblest spirit who had reigned there since the slaughter of Julius. The approaching catastrophe, whatever might be its form, Gregory was prepared to meet, with a serene confidence in God, and a haughty defiance of man. A few hours more, and the Castle of St. Angelo must have yielded to famine or to assault; when the aged Pope, in the very agony of his fate, gathered the reward of the policy with which he had cemented the alliance between the Papacy and the Norman conquerors of the South of Italy. Robert Guiscard, returning from Constantinople, flew to the rescue of his Suzerain. Scouts announced to Henry the approach of a mighty host, in which the Norman battle-axe, and the cross, were strangely united with the Saracenic cimeter, and the crescent. A precipitate retreat scarcely rescued his enfeebled troops from the impending danger. He abandoned his prey in a fever of disappointment. Unable to slake his thirst for vengeance, he might perhaps allay it by surprising the Great Countess, and overwhelming her forces, still in arms in the Modenese. But he was himself surprised in the attempt by her superior skill and vigilance. Shouts for St. Peter and Matilda roused the retreating Imperialists by night, near the Castle of Sorbaria. They retired across the Alps, with such a loss of men, of officers, and of treasure, as disabled them from any further enterprises.

The Emperor returned into Germany to reign undisturbed by civil war; for the great Otho was dead, and Herman of Luxemburg, who had assumed the Imperial title, was permitted to abdicate it with contemptuous impunity. Henry returned, however, to prepare for new conflicts with the Papacy — to drain the cup of toil, of danger, and of distress — and to die, at length, with a heart broken by the parricidal cruelty of his son. No prayers were said, and no requiem sung, over the unhallowed grave which received the bones of the excommunicated Monarch. Yet they were com-



mitted to the earth with the best and the kindest obsequies. The pity of his enemies, the lamentation of his subjects, and the unbidden tears of the poor, the widows and the orphans, who crowded round the bier of their benefactor, rendered his tomb not less sacred than if it had been blessed by the united prayers of the whole Christian Episcopacy. Those unbribed mourners wept over a Prince to whom God had given a large heart and a capacious mind ; but who had derived, from canonised Bishops, a corrupting education, and from a too early and too unchequered prosperity, the development of every base and cruel appetite ; but to whom calamity had imparted a self-dominion, from which none could withhold his respect, and an active sympathy with sorrow, to which none could refuse his love.

With happier fortunes, as, indeed, with loftier virtues, Matilda continued, for twenty-five years, to wage war in defence of the Apostolic See. After a life which might seem to belong to the province of romance rather than of history, she died at the age of seventy-five, bequeathing to the world a name second, in the annals of her age, to none but that of Hildebrand himself.

To him the Norman rescue of the Papal city brought only a momentary relief. He returned in triumph to the Lateran. But, within a few hours, he looked from the walls of that ancient palace on a scene of woe such as, till then, had never passed before him. A sanguinary contest was raging between the forces of Robert and the citizens attached to Henry. Every street was barricaded ; every house had become a fortress. The pealing of bells, the clash of arms, cries of fury, and shrieks of despair, assailed his ears in dismal concert. When the sun set behind the Tuscan hills on this scene of desolation, another light, and a still more fearful struggle, succeeded. Flames ascended at once from every quarter. They leaped from house to house, enveloping and destroying whatever was most splendid or most sacred, in the edifices of mediæval Rome. Amidst the roar of the conflagration they had kindled, and by its portentous light, the fierce Saracens, and the ruthless Northmen, revelled in plunder, lust, and carnage, like demons by the glare of their native pandemonium. Gregory gazed with agony on the real and present aspect of civil war. Perhaps he thought with penitence on the wars he had kindled beyond the Alps. Two-thirds of the city perished. Every convent was violated, every altar profaned, and multitudes driven away into perpetual and hopeless slavery.

Himself a voluntary exile, Gregory sought, in the Castle of Salerno, and under the protection of the Normans, the security he could no longer find among his own exasperated subjects. Age

and anxiety weighed heavily upon him. An unwonted lassitude depressed a frame till now incapable of fatigue. He recognised the summons of death, and his soul rose with unconquerable power to entertain that awful visitant. He summoned round his bed the Bishops and Cardinals who had attended his flight from Rome. He passed before them, in firm and rapid retrospect, the incidents of his eventful life. He maintained the truth of the great principles by which it had been governed from the commencement to the close. He named his three immediate successors in the Papacy. He assured his weeping friends of his intercession for them in heaven. He forgave, and blessed, and absolved his enemies, though with the resolute exceptions of the Emperor and the Anti-Pope. He then composed himself to die. His faltering lips had closed on the transubstantiated elements. The final unction had given assurance that the body, so soon to be committed to the dust, would rise again in honour and incorruption. Anxious to catch the last accents of that once oracular voice, the mourners were bending over him, when, struggling in the very grasp of death, he collected, for one last effort, his failing powers, and breathed out his spirit with the indignant exclamation — “I have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity : and therefore I die in exile !”

It was not permitted, even to the genius of Hildebrand, to condense, into a single sentence, an epitome of such a life as his. It was a life scarcely intelligible to his own generation, or to himself, nor indeed to our age, except by the light of that ecclesiastical history in which it forms so important an era.

It had ill beseemed the inspired wisdom of the tent-maker of Tarsus, and of the Galilean fishermen, to have founded on any other than a popular basis, a society destined to encounter the enmity of the dominant few, by the zeal of the devoted many. From the extant monuments of their lives and writings, it accordingly appears that they conceded to the lay multitude an ample share in the finance, the discipline, and the legislation of the collective body. The deacons were the tribunes of the Christian people. This was the age of Proselytism.

In the sad and solemn times which followed, ecclesiastical authority became austere and arbitrary, and submission to it enthusiastic. Martyrs, in the contemplation of mortal agonies, and of an opening paradise, had no thoughts for the adjustment and balancing of sacerdotal powers. They who braved the wild beasts of the amphitheatre, or the ascetic rigours of the wilderness, were the heroes of the Church. The rest sank into a degraded caste. But all laid bare their souls at the confessional. All acknowledged a dominion

which, discountenanced by the state, sustained itself by extreme and recondite maxims of government. In virtue of such maxims, the Episcopal order encroached on every other. The vicarious attributes of Deity were ascribed to those who ministered at the altar. There, and at the font, gifts of inestimable price were placed, in popular belief, at the disposal of the priest; whose miracles, though unattested by sense or consciousness, threw into the shade the mightiest works of Moses and of Christ. This was the age of Persecution.

Heretics arose. To refute them from the sacred text was sometimes difficult, always hazardous. It was easier to silence them by a living authority. The Bishops came forth as the elect depositaries of an unwritten code. Tradition became the rule of the Christian world. It might crush the errors of Arius, but it might sustain the usurpations of Ambrose. This was the age of Controversy.

Constantine saw the miraculous cross, and worshipped. He confirmed to the Christian hierarchy all their original, and all their acquired, powers. This was the age of the Church and State alliance.

The seat of empire was transferred from the Tiber to the Bosphorus. The Roman bishop and clergy seized on the vacant inheritance of abdicated authority. The Pope became the virtual sovereign of the Roman city. The Greeks and Latins became ecclesiastical rivals. Then was first heard the Roman watchword, and rallying cry, of the Visible Unity of the Church. This was the age of Papal Independence.

Goths, Vandals, Huns, Bulgarians, Franks, and Lombards, conquered the dominions of Caesar. But they became the converts and tributaries of Peter. The repulse of the Saracens by Charles Martel gave to Europe a new empire, to the Church a second Constantine. This was the age of Barbaric Invasion.

Europe became one vast assemblage of military states. The lands were everywhere partitioned by the conquerors among their liegemen, who, having bound themselves to use their swords in their lords' defence, imposed a similar obligation on their own tenants, who, in turn, exacted it from their subordinate vassals. This was the age of Feudalism and of Hildebrand.

He ascended the Apostolic throne, therefore, armed with prescriptions in favour of the loftiest claims of the hierarchy, thus reaching back almost to the apostolic times. But he found in the Papal armoury other weapons scarcely less keen, though of a more recent fabric. Of these the most effective were the intimate alliance of the Roman See with the monastic orders, and the re-

appearance, in theological debate, of that mystic word which, seven centuries before, had wrought such prodigies at Nicæa. He who first taught men to speak of an Hypostatic change beneath unchanging forms, may have taught them to use words without meaning. But though he added little or nothing to the received doctrines of the Church, he made an incalculable addition to the sacerdotal power.

To grasp, to multiply, and to employ these resources in such a manner as to render the Roman Pontiff the suzerain of the civilised world, was the end for which Hildebrand lived—an unworthy end, if contrasted with the high and holy purposes of the Gospel—an end even hateful, if contrasted with the free and generous spirit in which the primitive founders of the Church had established and inculcated her liberties—yet an end which might well allure a noble spirit in the eleventh century, and the attainment of which (so far as it was attained) may be now acknowledged to have been conducive, perhaps essential, to the progress of Christianity and civilisation.

To the spiritual despotism of Rome in the middle ages may, indeed, be traced a long series of errors and crimes, of wars and persecutions. Yet the Papal dynasty was the triumphant antagonist of another despotism the most galling, the most debasing, and otherwise the most irremediable, under which Europe had ever groaned. The centralisation of ecclesiastical power more than balanced the isolating spirit of the feudal oligarchies. The vassal of Western, and the serf of Eastern Europe, might otherwise, at this day, have been in the same social state, and military autocracies might now be occupying the place of our constitutional or paternal governments. Hildebrand's despotism, with whatever inconsistency, sought to guide mankind, by moral impulses, to a more than human sanctity. The feudal despotism with which he waged war, sought, with a stern consistency, to degrade them into beasts of prey, or beasts of burden. It was the conflict of mental with physical power, of literature with ignorance, of religion with injustice and debauchery. To the Popes of the middle ages was assigned a province, the abandonment of which would have plunged the Church and the World into the same hopeless slavery. To Pope Gregory the Seventh were first given the genius and the courage to raise himself and his successors to the level of that high vocation.

Yet Hildebrand was the founder of a tyranny only less odious than that which he arrested, and was apparently actuated by an ambition neither less proud, selfish, nor reckless, than that of his



secular antagonists. In the great economy of Providence, human agency is ever alloyed by some base motives; and the noblest success recorded by history, must still be purchased at the price of some great ultimate disaster.

To the title of the Czar Peter of the Church, conferred on him by M. Guizot, Hildebrand's only claim is, that by the energy of his will, he moulded her institutions, and her habits of thought, to his own purposes. But the Czar wrought in the spirit of an architect who invents, arranges, and executes his own plan: Hildebrand in the spirit of a builder, erecting by divine command a temple of which the divine hand had drawn the design, and provided the materials. His faith in what he judged to be the purposes and the will of Heaven, was not merely sublime, but astounding. He is everywhere depicted, in his own letters, the habitual denizen of that bright region which the damps of fear never penetrate, and the shadows of doubt never overcast.

To extol him as one of those Christian stoics whom the wreck of worlds could not divert from the straight paths of integrity and truth, is a mere extravagance. His policy was Imperial; his resources and his arts Sacerdotal. Anathemas and flatteries, stern defiances and subtle insinuations, invectives such as might have been thundered by Genseric, and apologies such as might have been whispered by Augustulus, succeed each other in his story, with no visible trace of hesitation or of shame. Even his professed orthodoxy is rendered questionable by his conduct and language towards Berengarius, the great opponent of transubstantiation. With William of England, Philip of France, and Robert of Apulia, and even with Henry of Germany, he temporised at the expense of his own principles as often as the sacrifice seemed advantageous. "Nature gave horns to Bulls." To aspiring and belligerent Churchmen she gave Dissimulation and Artifice.

Our exhausted space forbids the attempt to analyse or delineate the personal character of the great founder of the spiritual despotism of Rome. His acts must stand in place of such a portraiture. He found the Papacy dependent on the Empire: he sustained her by alliances almost commensurate with the Italian Peninsula. He found the Papacy electoral by the Roman people and clergy: he left it electoral by a college of Papal nomination. He found the Emperor the virtual patron of the Holy See: he wrested that power from his hands. He found the secular clergy the allies and dependants of the secular power: he converted them into the inalienable auxiliaries of his own. He found the higher ecclesiastics in servitude to the temporal sovereigns: he delivered them from



that yoke to subjugate them to the Roman Tiara. He found the patronage of the Church the mere desecrated spoil and merchandise of princes: he reduced it within the dominion of the Supreme Pontiff. He is celebrated as the reformer of the impure and profane abuses of his age: he is more justly entitled to the praise of having left the impress of his own gigantic character on the history of all the ages which have succeeded him.

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## SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

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IT was a noble design which died with Robert Southey. His History of the Monastic Orders would not perhaps have poured a large tribute of philosophy, divine or human, into the ocean of knowledge; but how graceful would have been the flow of that transparent narrative, and how would it have reflected and enhanced the beauty of every rich champaign, and of every towering promontory, along which it would have swept! Peremptory and dogmatical as he was, he addressed himself to the task of instructing his own and future generations, with a just sense of the dignity, and of the responsibilities, of that high office. He was too brave a man, and too sound a Protestant, to shrink from any aspect of truth; nor would he ever have supposed that he could promote a legitimate object of ecclesiastical history, by impairing the well-earned fame of any of the worthies of the Church, because they had been entangled in the sophistries, or the superstitions, of the ages in which they flourished.

M. Chavin de Malan has adopted the project of our fellow-countryman, and is publishing a Monastic History in a series of fragments, among which is a volume on the founder and the progress of the Franciscan Order. Though among the most passionate and uncompromising devotees of the Church of Rome, M. Chavin de Malan is also in one sense a Protestant. He protests against any exercise of human reason in examining any dogma which that Church inculcates, or any fact which she alleges. The most merciless of her cruelties affect him with no indignation, the silliest of her prodigies with no shame, the basest of her superstitions with no contempt. Her veriest dotage is venerable in his eyes. Even the atrocities of Innocent the Third seem, to this all extolling eulogist, but to augment the triumph and the glories of his reign. If the soul of the confessor of Simon de Montfort, retaining all the passions and all the prejudices of that æra, should transmigrate into a Doctor of the Sorbonne, conversant with the arts and literature of our own times, the result might be the pro-

duction of such an Ecclesiastical History as that of which M. de Malan has given us a specimen — elaborate in research, glowing in style, vivid in portraiture; utterly reckless and indiscriminate in belief; extravagant, up to the very verge of idolatry, in applause; and familiar, far beyond the verge of indecorum, with the most awful topics and objects of the Christian faith.

The episode of which M. Chavin de Malan disposes in his *Life of Francis of Assisi*, is among the most curious and important in the annals of the Church; and the materials for such a biography are more than usually copious and authentic. First in order are the extant writings, — consisting chiefly of letters, colloquies, poems, and predictions, — of the Saint himself. His earliest biographer, Thomas of Celano, was his follower and his personal friend. Three of the intimate associates of the Saint (one of them his confessor) compiled a joint narrative of his miracles and his labours. Bonaventura, himself a General of the Franciscan Order, wrote a celebrated life of the Founder, whom in his infancy he had seen. And lastly, there is a chronicle called *Fioretti di San Francisco*, which, though not written till half a century after his death, has always been held in much esteem by the hagiographers. Within the last thirty years a new edition of it has been published at Verona. On these five authorities all the more recent narratives are founded. Yet the works of Thomas de Celano, and of the “*Tres Socii*,” with the writings of Francis himself, are the only sources of contemporary intelligence strictly so called; although Bonaventura and the chronicler of the *Fioretti* had large opportunities of ascertaining the reality of the facts they have related. How far they availed themselves of that advantage, may be partly inferred from the following brief epitome of those occurrences.

The city of Assisi, in Umbria, was a mart of some importance in the latter half of the twelfth century. At that period it could boast no merchant more adventurous or successful than Pietro Bernadone di Mericoni. Happy in a thriving trade, and happier still in an affectionate wife, he was above all happy in the prospect of the future eminence of his son Francisco. The foremost in every feat of arms, and the gayest in every festival, the youth was at the same time assiduous in the counting-house; and though his expenditure was profuse, it still flowed in such channels as to attest the princely munificence of his spirit. The brightest eyes in Assisi, dazzled by so many graces, and the most reverend brows there, acknowledging such early wisdom, were alike bent with complacency towards him; and all conspired to sustain his father's belief, that, in his person, the name of Bernadone would rival the proudest of those whom neither Transalpine conquerors, nor the

Majesty of the Tiara, disdained to propitiate in the guilds of Venice or of Pisa.

Uniform, alas! is the dirge of all the generations of mankind, over hopes blossoming but to die. In a combat with the citizens of Perugia, Francis was taken prisoner; and, after a captivity of twelve months, was released only to encounter a disease, which, at the dawn of manhood, brought him within view of the gates of death. Long, earnest, and inquisitive was his gaze into the inscrutable abyss on which they open; and when at length he returned to the duties of life, it was in the awe-stricken spirit of one to whom those dread realities had been unveiled. The world one complicated imposture, all sensible delights so many polluting vanities, human praise and censure but the tinkling of the cymbals, — what remained but to spurn these empty shadows, that so he might grasp the one imperishable object of man's sublunary existence? His alms became lavish. His days and nights were consumed in devout exercises. Prostrate in the crowded church, or in the recesses of the forest, his agitated frame attested the conflict of his mind. He exchanged dresses with a tattered mendicant, and pressed to his bosom a wretch rendered loathsome by leprosy. But as he gradually gathered strength from these self-conquests, or as returning health restored the tone and vigour of his nerves, his thoughts, reverting to the lower world, wandered in search of victories of another order.

Walter of Brienne was in arms in the Neapolitan States against the Emperor; the weak opposed to the powerful; the Italian to the German; the Guelph to the Ghibelline; and Francis laid him down to sleep, resolved that, with the return of day, he would join the "Gentle Count," as he was usually called, in resisting the oppressor to the death. In his slumbers a vast armoury seemed to open to his view; and a voice commanded him to select from the burnished weapons with which it was hung, such as he could most effectually wield against the impious enemy of the Church. The dreamer awoke; and in prompt submission to the celestial mandate, laid aside the serge gown and modest bonnet of his craft, and exhibited himself to his admiring fellow-citizens armed cap-à-pie, and urging on his war-horse towards the encampment of his destined leader. At Spoleto fatigue arrested his course. Again he slept, and again the voice was heard. It announced to him that the martial implements of his former vision were not, as he had supposed, such as are borne beneath a knightly banner against a carnal adversary, but arms of spiritual temper, to be directed, in his native city, against the invisible powers of darkness. He listened and obeyed; and Assisi re-opened her gates to her re-

turning warrior, resolute to break a lance with a more fearful foe than was ever sent by the Emperor into the field.

To superficial judges it probably appeared as if that dread antagonist had won an easy triumph over his young assailant. For Francis was seen once more the graceful leader of the civic revels, bearing in his hand the sceptre of the king of frolic, and followed by a joyous band, who made the old streets echo with their songs. As that strain arose, however, a dark shadow gathered over the countenance of the leader, and amid the general chorus his voice was unheard. "Why so grave, Francis? Art thou going to be married?" exclaimed one of the carollers. "I am," answered Francis, "and to a lady of such rank, wealth, and beauty, that the world cannot produce her like." He burst from the jocund throng in search of her, and was ere long in her embrace. He vowed to take her "for his wedded wife, for better for worse, to love and to cherish till death should them part." The lady was Poverty. The greatest poet of Italy and the greatest orator of France have celebrated their nuptials. But neither Dante nor Bossuet was the inventor of the parable. It was ever on the lips of Francis himself, that Poverty was his bride, that he was her devoted husband, and the whole Franciscan order their offspring.

His fidelity to his betrothed lady was inviolate, but was not unassailed by temptation. Pleasure, wealth, ambition, were the syrens who, with witching looks and songs, attempted to divert him from his Penelope; and when he could no longer combat, he at least could fly, the fascination. Wandering in the Umbrian hills, he wept and fasted, and communed with the works of God; till raised to communion with their Maker, he knelt in a rustic church which the piety of ancient times had consecrated there to the memory of St. Damiano.

The voice which directed his path in life was heard again. "Seest thou not," it cried, "that my temple is falling into ruins? Restore it." Again the spirit of interpretation failed him. Instead of addressing himself to renovate the spiritual, he undertook the repairs of the material fabric — an arduous task for the future spouse of Poverty! But obedience was indispensable. Rising from his knees, he hastened to his father's warehouse; laded a stout palfrey with silks and embroideries; sold both horse and goods at the neighbouring town of Foligno; and laid down the money at the feet of the officiating priest of St. Damiano. The more cautious churchman rejected the gold. Francis indignantly cast it into the mire; and vowed that the building so solemnly committed to his care should become his dwelling-place and his home, till the Divine behest had been fulfilled.



During all this time hallucinations of his own, though of a far different kind, had haunted the brain of the respectable Pietro Bernadone. Grouping into forms ever new and brilliant, like spangles shaken in a kaleidoscope, the ideas of bales and bills of lading, of sea risks and of supercargoes, had combined with those of loans to reckless crusaders and of the supply of hostile camps, to form one gorgeous El Dorado, when intelligence of the loss of his draperies, his pack-horse, and his son, restored him to the waking world and to himself. The goods and the quadruped were gone irrevocably. But as the exasperated father paced the streets of Assisi, a figure emaciated with fasts and vigils, squalid with dirt, and assailed by the filthy missiles of a hooting rabble, approached him, and as it moved onwards with a measured tread, an uplifted eye, and a serene aspect, it revealed to the old merchant, in this very sorry spectacle of dignified suffering, the long-cherished object of his ambitious hopes. What biographer even now can tell the sequel without a blush! Francis was hurried away from his persecutors and his admirers, in the grasp of the elder Bernadone, and, from his vigorous arm, received that kind of chastisement under which heroism itself ceases to be sublime. The incensed judge then passed a chain round the body of the youth, and left him in a kind of domestic prison, there to satiate his love for penances, until his own return from a journey to which the inexorable demands of his commerce had summoned him.

Wiser far and more gentle was the custody to which Francis was transferred, and a voice was heard in his penitentiary full of a more genuine inspiration than any of those by which his steps had been hitherto guided. It was the voice of his mother, soothing her half-distracted child in accents as calm and as holy as those which first broke the silence of Eden. It spoke to him of maternal love, of reconciliation, and of peace. But it addressed him in vain. He was bound to leave father and mother, and to cleave to his betrothed wife, and to the duties of that indissoluble alliance. Convinced at length of the vanity, perhaps trembling at the impiety, of any further resistance, his mother threw open his prison doors, and permitted him to escape to his sanctuary at St. Damiano.

In those hallowed precincts Francis found courage to oppose, and constancy to disarm, the rage with which he was pursued by his father. Gradually, but surely, the mind of the old man embraced the discovery, that, though dwelling on the same planet, he and his son were inhabitants of different worlds. From that conviction he advanced with incomparable steadiness to the practical results involved in it. Why, he inquired, should a churchman, to whom all earthly interests were as the fine dust in the balance, retain the

price of the pack-horse and of his pack? The priest of St. Damiano immediately restored the scattered gold, which he had providently gathered up. Why should a youth, who despised all treasures, but those laid up in heaven, retain his prospective right to a sublunary inheritance? A renunciation of it was at once drawn up, signed, and placed in his hands. Why should a candidate for cowl and scapulary retain the goodly apparel in which he had reached his place of refuge? In a few moments the young probationer stood before him in his shirt. Carefully packing up the clothes, the parchment, and the gold, the merchant returned to accumulate more gold at Assisi. And here history takes her leave of him; without regret and without applause, but not without a sullen acknowledgment that, after all, it was from the mortal Pietro that the immortal Francis derived one inheritance which he could not renounce — the inheritance of that inflexible decision of purpose which elevated the father to distinction among the worshippers of Mammon, and the son to eminence among the saints of Christendom.

It was indeed “an obstinate hill to climb.” An orphan with living parents, a beggar entitled to a splendid patrimony, he traversed the mountains with the freedom of soul known only to those for whom the smiles of fortune have no charm, and her frowns no terror. Chanting divine canticles as he went, his voice attracted the banditti who lurked in those fastnesses. They tossed the worthless prize contemptuously into a snow drift. Half frozen, he crawled to a neighbouring monastery, and was employed by the monks as a scullion. He returned to the scene of his former revels; and obtained the cloak, the leathern girdle, and the staff, of a pilgrim, as an alms from one who, in those brilliant days, had confessed his superiority in every graceful art and in every feat of chivalry. With the dress, he assumed the spirit, of a pilgrim; and devoted himself to the relief of the sorrows of those who like himself, though for a very different reason, were estranged from a cold and a fastidious world.

The Crusaders had at this period introduced the Leprosy of the East into all the countries embracing the Mediterranean Sea. A ritual was compiled for the purpose of celebrating with impressive solemnity the removal of the victims of that fearful malady from all intercourse with their fellow Christians. It was a pathetic and melancholy service, in which the sternest interdict was softened by words of consolation and of pity. Nor were they words of empty ceremonial. A sentiment of reverence towards those miserable sufferers was widely diffused throughout the whole of Europe. The obscurity which hung over the origin, the nature, and the

cure of the disease, and the mysterious connexion in which it stood to the warfare for the Holy Sepulchre, had induced that wonder-loving age to invest it with a kind of sacred character. The churchmen of the times availed themselves skilfully and kindly of this popular feeling. They taught that Christ himself had regarded the leprous with peculiar tenderness; and not content to enforce this lesson from those parts of the evangelic narrative which really confirm it, they advanced, by the aid of the Vulgate, further still; and quoted from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, a prophecy in which, as they maintained, the Messiah himself was foretold under the image of a leper. "*Nos putavimus eum quasi Leprosum, percutsum a Deo, et humiliatum.*" Kings and princes visited, countesses ministered to them, saints (as it was believed) wrought miracles for their cure, and almost every considerable city erected hospitals for their reception and relief.

Some time before his betrothment to Poverty, Francis, crossing on horseback the plain which surrounds Assisi, unexpectedly drew near to a leper. Controlling his involuntary disgust, the rider dismounted and advanced to greet and to succour him; but the leper instantaneously disappeared. St. Bonaventura is sponsor for the sequel of the tale. He who assumed this deplorable semblance was, in reality, no other than the awful Being whom the typical language of Isaiah had adumbrated. Little wonder, then, that after his vows had been plighted to his austere bride, Francis had faith to see, and charity to love, even in the leprous, the imperishable traces of the Divine image in which man was created, and the brethren of the Divine sufferer by whom man was redeemed.

Yet, despite this triumph of the spiritual discernment over the carnal sense, neither faith nor charity could subdue his natural terror in the prospect of a continued and familiar intercourse with such associates. Some distinct disclosure of the Divine will was still requisite to such a self-immolation; and such disclosures were never long denied to him. The now familiar voice was heard anew. "Hate what thou hast hitherto loved," it cried; "Love what thou hast hitherto hated." He listened, and became an inmate of the Leprous Hospital at Assisi. With his own hands he washed the feet and dressed the sores of the lepers; and once at least reverently applied his lips to such a wound. The man (so says St. Bonaventura) instantly became whole. "Whether shall we most admire," he exclaims, "the miraculous power, or the courageous humility of that kiss?" A question to be asked of those who believe in both. But even they who reject the miracle, will revere the lovingkindness of such a sojourn among such unhappy outcasts

In later days Francis became the father and the apostle of the leprous; and when weightier cares withdrew him in person from that charge, his heart still turned towards them with a father's yearnings. Among his numerous followers, were some who, though destitute of the higher gifts of intellect, were largely endowed with the heroism of self-denying love. James, surnamed the Simple, was amongst the most conspicuous of them; and in those abodes of woe he earned the glorious title of steward and physician of the leprous. It happened that, in his simplicity, James brought one of his patients to worship at a much frequented church, and there received from Francis the rebuke so well merited for his indiscretion. The heart of the sick man was oppressed as he listened to the censure pronounced on his benefactor; and the heart of Francis was moved within him to perceive that he had thus inadvertently added to the burden of the heavy laden. He fell at the leper's feet, implored his forgiveness, sat down with him to eat out of the same dish, embraced and dismissed him! Had he grasped every subtle distinction of the *Summa Theologiæ* itself, or had he even built up that stupendous monument of the learning of his age, it would have been a lower title to the honours of canonisation.

The church of St. Damiano still lay in ruins. The command to rebuild it was still unrevoked. Ill success had followed the attempt to extract the requisite funds from the hoards of the old merchant. Plutus, his inexorable father, had been invoked in vain. Poverty, his affianced wife, might be more propitious. He wooed her in the form she loves best. In the dress and character of a beggar, he traversed the city through which he had been wont to pass as at once the gayest of her troubadours, the bravest of her captains, and the most sumptuous of her merchants. Assisi had her witty men who jeered, her wise men who looked grave, and her respectable men who were scandalised, as this strange apparition invoked their alms in the names of the Virgin and of St. Damiano. Solemn heads were shaken at the sight, in allusion to the supposed state of the brain of the mendicant. But the sarcasms of the facetious, and the conclusive objections of the sensible, fell on Francis like arrows rebounding from the scales of Behemoth. His energy silenced and repelled them all. Insurmountable difficulties gave way before him. The squalid lazar became the inspiring genius of the architect, the paymaster of the builders, the menial drudge of the workman. Sometimes he came with money in his hand, sometimes with stones and mortar on his back. At his bidding, nave, chancel, arches, roof, and towers, rose from their foundations. The sacred edifice appeared in renovated splendour. The heavenly precept was obeyed.



Prompt and decisive was the reaction of popular feeling. Instead of debating whether this strange mortal was rogue or maniac, it was now argued that he must be either a necromancer or a saint. The wise and more charitable opinion prevailed. Near to the city was a ruined church sacred to the prince of the apostles. Confident in his late success, Francis rather demanded than implored contributions for rebuilding it. Purses were emptied into his hands, and speedily the dome of St. Peter looked down in all its pristine dignity on the marts and battlements of Assisi.

There were no church-building commissioners in those days. In their stead, a half-starved youth in the rags of a bedesman moved along the streets of his native city, appealing to every passer-by, in quiet tones and earnest words, and with looks still more persuasive, to aid him in reconstructing the chapel of La Porzioncula; a shrine of Our Lady of Angels, of which the remains may yet be seen, at once hallowing and adorning the quiet meadow by which Assisi is surrounded. "He wept to think upon her stones, it grieved him to see her in the dust." Vows were uttered, processions formed, jewels, plate, and gold were laid at the feet of the gentle enthusiast: and Mary with her attendant angels rejoiced (so at least it was devoutly believed) over the number and the zeal of the worshippers who once more thronged the courts erected in honour of her name.

From that devout company he was not often absent, by whose pious zeal the work had been accomplished. As he knelt before the altar, the oracular voice, so often heard before, again broke in upon the silence of his soul. It cried, "Take nothing for your journey, neither staves nor scrip, neither bread nor money, neither have two coats a-piece." A caviller, in the plight to which Francis was reduced already, might have evaded such an injunction. But Francis was no caviller. The poor fragment left to him of this world's goods, his shoes, his staff, his leathern girdle, and his empty purse, were abandoned; and in his coarse cloak of serge, drawn round him with a common cord, he might defy men and devils to plunge him more deeply in the lack of this world's wealth, or to rekindle in his heart the passion for it.

And now were consummated his nuptials with his betrothed spouse. Dante has composed the Epithalamium in the eleventh Canto of the *Paradiso*:—

"Not long the period from his glorious birth,  
When, with extraordinary virtue blest,  
This wondrous Son began to comfort earth;  
Bearing, while yet a child, his father's ire,  
For sake of her whom all as death detest,  
And banish from the gate of their desire.



Before the spiritual court, before  
 His father, too, he took her for his own :  
 From day to day then loved her more and more.

\* \* \* \*

But lest my language be not clearly seen,  
 Know, that in speaking of these lovers twain,  
 Francis and Poverty henceforth I mean.  
 Their joyful looks, with pleasant concord fraught,  
 Where love and sweetness might be seen to reign,  
 Were unto others cause of holy thought.”\*

Nor did Bossuet himself disdain to emulate this part of the “divine comedy.” In the panegyric bestowed on the saint by the great orator, Francis is introduced as thus addressing his bride : —

“Ma chère Pauvreté, si basse que soit ton extraction selon le jugement des hommes, je t’estime depuis que mon maître t’a épousée. Et certes,” proceeds the preacher, “il avait raison, Chrétiens ! Si un roi épouse une fille de basse extraction, elle devient reine ; on en murmure quelque temps, mais enfin on la reconnaît : elle est ennoblie par le mariage du prince.” “Oh pauvres ! que vous êtes heureux ! parce qu’à vous appartient le royaume de Dieu. Heureux donc mille et mille fois, le pauvre François ; le plus ardent, le plus transporté, et, si j’ose parler de la sorte, le plus désespéré amateur de la pauvreté qui ait peut-être été dans l’église.”

Art contributed her aid to commemorate this solemn union. In one of the churches of Assisi may yet be seen a fresco, by Giotto, of Francis and his bride ; he placing the nuptial ring on her finger, and she crowned with light and roses, but clothed in sordid apparel, and her feet torn by the sharp stones and briars over which she is passing.

As often as the rising sun had in former days lighted up the spires of Assisi, it had summoned the hard-handed many to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows ; and the prosperous few to drive bargains, or to give them legal form ; to chant masses, or to assist at them ; to confess, or to lay up matter for confession ; to arrange their toilettes, or to sit in judgment on the dresses and characters of others ; to sleep through the sultry noon, and to while away the long soft summer nights with dice, music, scandal or lovers’ vows ; till after some few circuits through the Zodiac, the same sun looked down on their children’s children sauntering at the same listless pace, along the same flowery road, to the same inevitable bourne. But no sooner had these prolific nuptials been celebrated, than the inert mass of human existence at Assisi began to heave with unwonted agitation. In her streets and public walks

\* Wright’s *Dante*.

and churches, might be daily encountered the presence of one, most merciless to himself, most merciful to others. His few, simple, and affectionate words, penetrated those cold and frivolous minds; for they were uttered in the soul-subduing power of a seer, whose wide horizon embraces the sublime objects visible to the eye of faith, though hidden from the grosser eye of sense.

Of the union of Francis and Poverty, Bernard de Quintavalle was the first fruits. He was a man of wealth and distinction, and had cherished some distrust of the real sanctity of his fellow-townsmen. Bernard therefore brought him to his house, laid himself down to rest in the same chamber, and pretended to sleep while he watched the proceedings of his guest. He saw him rise and kneel, extend his arms, weep tears of rapture, and gaze towards heaven, exclaiming repeatedly, "My God, and my all!" At this sight all doubts were dissipated. "Tell me," said Bernard to his friend, when they met shortly afterwards, "if a slave should receive from his master a treasure which he finds to be useless to him, what ought he to do with it?" "Let him restore it," said Francis, "to his master." "Lo then," replied Bernard, "I render back to God the earthly goods with which He has enriched me." "We will go together to church," rejoined the spouse of Poverty, "and, after hearing mass, we will ascertain His will." In their way thither they were joined by Peter of Catania, who, though a canon of the cathedral church of Assisi, was another aspirant after the same sublime self-sacrifice.

The three knelt together before the altar; and when the mass had been sung, the officiating priest, at their request, made the sign of the cross over the missal, and then devoutly opened it. Once on behalf of each of them were these *sortes sanctorum* tried. We are the humble transcribers, not the sponsors of the marvels which followed. To the first inquiry, the response of the oracle was, "If ye will be perfect, go and sell all that ye have." To the second it answered, "Take nothing for your journey." To the third and last was returned the admonition, "He that would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." "Ye have heard, my brethren," exclaimed Francis, "what must be our rule of life, and the rule of all who shall join us. Let us obey the Divine command." It was obeyed implicitly. Bernard and Peter sold all they had, and gave it to the poor; and, having stripped themselves of all temporal wealth as absolutely as their leader, they assumed his austere dress, and avowed themselves his disciples.

A great event had happened in an unconscious world. Though but three had thus met together, yet the order of Minorites or

Franciscan brethren was constituted. Six centuries have since passed away; and it still flourishes, one of the elements of life, if not of progress, in the great Christian commonwealth.

The grain of mustard-seed soon began to germinate. Francis, Bernard, and Peter, retired together to a hut in the centre of the plain of Rivo Torto; so called from a serpentine stream which wanders through it. With what authority the founder ruled even these, his first followers, may be inferred from the fact, (attested by the usual evidence,) that after the death of Peter, such prodigies of healing were wrought at his tomb, as much disturbed the devout retirement of his surviving friends. "Brother Peter, you always obeyed me implicitly when you were alive," at length exclaimed the much perplexed Francis—"I expect from you a similar submission now. The visitors to your tomb annoy us sadly. In the name of holy obedience I command you to work no more miracles." Peter at once dutifully desisted from his posthumous works of mercy. "So obedient," observes M. Chavin de Malan, writing in this nineteenth century, "were the family of Francis even after death."

At Rivo Torto, Egidius, another rich citizen of Assisi, sought out and joined the new society. Famous for many graces, and for not a few miracles, he is especially celebrated for having received at Perugia a visit from St. Louis in disguise, when the two saints long knelt together in silence, embracing each other, in such a manner as to bring their hearts into the closest possible contiguity. On the departure of the King, Egidius was rebuked by his brethren for his rudeness, in not having uttered a word to so great a sovereign. "Marvel not," he answered, "that we did not speak. A divine light laid bare to each of us the heart of the other. No words could have intelligibly expressed that language of the soul, or have imparted the same sacred consolation. So impotent is the tongue of man to utter divine mysteries."

Sabbatini, of whom we read only that he was *vir bonus et rectus*—Morico, a crusader, who had been miraculously cured by the prayers of Francis—John de Capella, "who, like another Judas, hanged himself at last"—Sylvester, who, in a dream, had seen the arms of Francis extended to either end of the world, while a golden cross reached from his lips to heaven—with four other worthies, of whom history has preserved only the names, followed the steps of the mystic Egidius. In the dilapidated hut of Rivo Torto, twelve poor men had now assembled. To a common observer they might have passed for the beggar king and his tattered crew. To the leader himself they appeared, more justly, an image of the

brotherhood of which the patriarchal family had been the type, and the apostolic college the antitype.

The morning had dawned over the hills from which the river Torto flows, and long had been the prayer of Francis, when, rising from his knees, he called his brethren round him, and thus addressed them: "Take courage, and shelter yourselves in God. Be not depressed to think how few we are. Be not alarmed either at your own weakness, or at mine. God has revealed to me that He will diffuse through the earth this our little family, of which He is himself the Father. I would have concealed what I have seen, but love constrains me to impart it to you. I have seen a great multitude coming to us, to wear our dress, to live as we do. I have seen all the roads crowded with men travelling in eager haste towards us. The French are coming. The Spaniards are hastening. The English and the Germans are running. All nations are mingling together. I hear the tread of the numbers who go and come to execute the commands of holy obedience."—"We seem contemptible and insane. But fear not. Believe that our Saviour, who has overcome the world, will speak effectually in us. If gold should lie in our way, let us value it as the dust beneath our feet. We will not, however, condemn or despise the rich who live softly, and are arrayed sumptuously. God, who is our master, is theirs also. But go and preach repentance for the remission of sins. Faithful men, gentle, and full of charity, will receive you and your words with joy. Proud and impious men will condemn and oppose you. Settle it in your hearts to endure all things with meekness and patience. The wise and the noble will soon join themselves to you, and, with you, will preach to kings, to princes, and to nations. Be patient in tribulation, fervent in prayer, fearless in labour, and the kingdom of God, which endures for ever, shall be your reward."

Such, we are assured by his "Three Companions," was the inaugural discourse of Francis to his first disciples. Then drawing on the earth on which he stood a figure of the cross, each limb of which was turned to one of the four cardinal points of the compass, and arranging his brethren in the four corresponding lines, he dismissed each of them with the solemn benediction—"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall nourish thee." The new missionaries departed to their work of mercy, and Francis himself retired to the solitude of the hut of Rivo Torto.

In that retirement an arduous duty awaited him. He drew up there, in twenty-three chapters, the rule of his new monastic order, the "Magna Charta of Poverty." It did not essentially differ from the similar institutes of the Benedictines. To the vows of chastity and obedience, was however to be added a vow of Poverty yet more



stringent than theirs. His brethren were to labour with their hands, and were to be maintained by alms. But they were to solicit alms, not as suitors for a gratuitous favour, but as asserters of a positive right, which Christ himself had bestowed on the poor. A code of higher authority than any human laws, had imposed on the rich the office, and the obligations, of stewards for such as had need of sustenance. The indigent were the real proprietors of all earthly treasures. The food on which Dives fared sumptuously, belonged of right to Lazarus; and Dives could acquire an equal title to be fed, only by lying, in his turn, a beggar at the gate.

A doctrine always so welcome to the great body of mankind, could never have been announced with a surer prospect of a wide and cordial acceptance, by the people at large, than in the commencement of the thirteenth century. But the establishment in the church of a polity thus democratic, seemed no easy enterprise. He who wore the Triple Crown, could, it seemed, be scarcely expected to permit the creation of a new monastic institute on principles so menacing to all sovereigns, whether secular or spiritual. Yet without that permission, the founder might become an heresiarch as guilty as Peter Waldo, and his followers obnoxious to punishments as terrible as those of the Albigenses. It was in the summer of the year 1210 that Francis, accompanied by two or three of his disciples, made a pilgrimage to Rome, to obtain, if possible, from the formidable potentate, who then bore the keys and the sword of Peter, a sanction for these startling novelties.

The splendid palace of the Lateran reflected the rays of the evening sun as the wayworn travellers approached it. A group of churchmen in sumptuous apparel were traversing with slow and measured steps its lofty terrace, then called "the Mirror," as if afraid to overtake him who preceded them, in a dress studiously simple, and with a countenance wrapt in earnest meditation. Unruffled by passion, and yet elate with conscious power, that eagle eye, and those capacious brows, announced him the lord of a dominion which might have satisfied at once the pride of Diogenes, and the ambition of Alexander. Since the Tugurium was built on the Capitoline, no greater monarch had ever called the seven hills his own. But, in his Pontificate, no æra had occurred more arduous than that in which Innocent the Third saw the mendicants of Assisi prostrate themselves at his feet.

Twelve years had elapsed since his elevation to the Pontifical throne. In that period he had converted into realities the most audacious visions of Hildebrand. He had exacted the oath of fealty to himself from all the Imperial officers of the city. He had seized on the marches of Ancona and Umbria. He had annulled the



election of Frederick, the infant son of the deceased Emperor ; and, as Vicar of Christ on earth, had substituted for him the young Otho of Brunswick ; whom he afterwards excommunicated. He had laid France under an interdict to punish the divorce of Philip Augustus. He had given away the crowns of Bohemia and Bulgaria. He had received homage from John for the crown of England ; and, availing himself of Count Baldwin's capture of Constantinople, he had become the arbiter of the fortunes of the Eastern Empire. So far all had been triumphant. But dark clouds had now arisen, which may well be supposed to have shaped and coloured the evening reverie of this great conqueror ; when it was interrupted by the sudden appearance of Francis and his companions.

The interruption was as unwelcome as it was abrupt. As he gazed at the squalid dress and faces of his strange suitors, and observed their bare and unwashed feet, his lip curled with disdain, and, sternly commanding them to withdraw, he seemed again to retire from the outer world into some of the deep recesses of that capacious mind. Francis and his companions betook themselves to prayer ; Innocent to his couch. There (says the legend) he dreamed that a palm tree sprouted up from the ground between his feet, and, swiftly shooting up into the heavens, cast her boughs on every side, a shelter from the heat, and a refreshment to the weary. The vision of the night (so proceeds the tale) dictated the policy of the morning, and assured Innocent that, under his fostering care, the Franciscan palm would strike deep her roots, and expand her foliage on every side, in the vineyard of the church.

Never, however, was there a time when the councils of Rome were less really under the influence of narcotics of any kind. It must have been in the vigils, not in the slumbers, of the night, that the Pontiff revolved the incidents of the preceding evening, and perceived their full significance. Yet why deliberate at all when it is impossible to err ? Infallibility should advance to truth by one free intuitive bound, not hobbling on the crutches of inquiry and inference. It is among the mysteries which we are bound to revere in silence, that, whether in solitude or in synods, the inspired wisdom of Rome has always groped its way by the aid of human reasonings. No record remains of those which now governed the resolves of Innocent ; but an obvious conjecture may supply them.

The great traditional maxim of the Papal dynasty has ever been, to direct the tendencies of each succeeding age, by grasping and controlling those springs of action from which the spirit of each successively derives its mould, and form, and fashion. From every province of his spiritual empire, tidings had recently reached the

Pontiff of the appearance and rapid diffusion of a spirit, full of menace to all thrones, and urgently demanding subjugation. It might be called the fraternising spirit. It manifested itself in the creation of brotherhoods as barriers against despotism, both feudal and ecclesiastical. In all the chief cities of Europe, the merchants, citizens, and workmen, were forming themselves into guilds, and electing their own syndics and magistrates. Already might be discerned the active germs of the great commercial commonwealths of Florence, Pisa, and Genoa; of Frankfort, Ghent, and Bruges; of Hamburg, Lubeck, and Bremen; and those of the no less great commercial corporations of London, Bristol, and Norwich. Still more numerous were the religious associations which, in one vast, though incoherent, alliance, opposed the pride and luxury of their spiritual lords. From the Guadalquiver to the Elbe — from the Thames to the Tiber — swarms of such socialists practised, or seemed to practise, extreme austerities, and inculcated doctrines abhorred of the orthodox and the faithful. Obscurely distinguished from each other as Patarins, Cathari, Bons-Hommes, Poor Men of Lyons, Josephins, Flagellants, Publicani, and Waldenses, or grouped together under the general term of Albigenses, they rejected the sacraments of marriage and penance, and disbelieved the magical influence of baptism and the eucharist. They denied the lawfulness of oaths and of capital punishments. They maintained that no Divine ordinance was valid if administered by a priest in mortal sin. They taught that the successors of the Apostles were bound to succeed to the apostolic poverty; and, since none so well fulfilled that hereditary obligation as themselves, they thought that none were equally well entitled to discharge the apostolic office.

To refute these errors, Rome had employed her most irrefragable arguments: the bitter curses of Lucius; the cruelties, beyond conception horrible, of Innocent. The brand, the scourge, and the sword, had fallen from the wearied hands of the ministers of his vengeance. Hundreds were cast alive into the furnace, and not a few plunged into the flames with exulting declarations of the faith for which they perished. The Vicar of Christ bathed the banner of the cross in a carnage, from which the wolves of Romulus, and the eagles of Cæsar, would have turned away with loathing. But the will of the sufferers was indomitable; and this new scourge of God was constrained to feel, that, from conquests which left the immortal spirit unsubdued, he could derive no effectual security, and no enduring triumph.

Such was the menacing aspect which Christendom presented to her sacerdotal head at the moment, when, after having first repulsed, he again summoned to his presence, the mendicants of

Assisi. The other monastic orders formed so many ramparts round his throne. But neither the Benedictines with their splendid endowments, nor the Carthusians with their self-immolations, nor the Cisterrians in their studious solitudes, nor the Templars and Hospitallers with their sharp swords, nor the Beguines and Maturins with their half-secular pursuits, could oppose any effective weapons to the migratory gossellers, who in every land toiled, and preached, and died; at once the martyrs, and the devoted antagonists, of his power. It was, then, in no dreaming phantasy, but in open vision, that the palm-tree sprung up between his feet, as a new and a welcome shelter. The fervid speech, the resolved aspect, the lowly demeanour, the very dirt and wretchedness of those squalid vagrants, gave to that penetrating eye assurance of a devotedness which might rival and eclipse (and, perhaps, persuade) those whom Simon de Montfort had in vain attempted to exterminate. And as, in later days, Aristotelian innovations were neutralised by scholastic subtleties; — the all-emancipating press by the soul-subduing miracles of art; — the impassioned revolt of Luther by the ardent allegiance of Loyola: — so now, the ill-organised confederacy of the reformers of Western Europe might be counteracted by a zeal as impetuous as their own, but directed by the unerring sagacity of the Roman conclave, to far more systematic and effective exertions. The popular watchwords of Poverty, Continence, Lowliness, and Self-Denial, would no longer be used as so many reproaches on the Roman hierarchy, but as the war-cry of the self-mortified adherents of Rome. Her enthusiastic missionaries, commanding the sympathy of the multitude, would cause it to flow in holy indignation against the vices of the mitre and the coronet, but in pious loyalty towards the Triple Crown which had rested for a thousand years on the brows of the successors of Peter.

With such prescience, Innocent recalled into his presence the mendicant whose first overtures he had so contemptuously rejected. He now accepted them, cordially indeed, yet with characteristic caution. The laws of the proposed order of Minorites were examined, discussed, and approved. Heedless of the sinister predictions of the Sacred College, the Pope was willing to recognise, in the severity of their discipline, the perfection which Christ himself requires; and Francis, having plighted solemn vows of obedience, and having received in turn a no less solemn apostolic blessing, departed from the Lateran with an *unwritten* approbation of his rule.

Inflamed with holy ardour for the conversion of men, and for the defence of the fortress and centre of the Catholic faith, he returned to his native city. His toilsome march was a genuine

ovation. His steps were followed by admiring crowds; church bells rang out their peals at his approach; processions chanting solemn litanies advanced to meet him; enraptured devotees kissed his clothes, his hands, and his feet; proselytes of either sex, and of every rank and age, repeated the vows of poverty, continence, obedience, and labour; and, as the words passed from mouth to mouth, other vows strangely mingled with them, devoting lands, convents, and monasteries to the use of those whose abandonment of all worldly wealth was thus enthusiastically celebrated. Superb inconsistency! No homage, however extravagant, is refused by mankind to a will at once inflexible and triumphant; so great is the reverence unconsciously rendered, even by the least reflecting, to the great mystery of our nature;—the existence in man of volitions and of resolves, not absorbed in the Supreme Will, but, in some enigmatic sense, distinct from it. The simple-hearted Francis had a readier solution. “They honour God,” he exclaimed, “in the vilest of His creatures.” Whatever may have been the motive of the donors, the fact is certain, that, on his return from Rome, the spouse of Poverty received, for the use of his spiritual offering, a formal grant of the church of St. Mary of Angels, or the Porzioncula, which his pious zeal had reinstated.

Among the saints of the Roman calendar few enjoy a more exalted renown than St. Clare, a scion of the noble house of Ortolana. “Clara,” so runs the bull of her canonisation, “claris præclara meritis, magnæ in cœlo claritate gloriæ, ac in terrâ miraculorum sublimium, clare claret.” Even before her birth a voice from heaven had announced that her course of life was to be a brilliant one; and, at the instance of her mother, to whom the promise had been addressed, she therefore received at the baptismal font the significant name on which, after her death, Pope Alexander the Fourth was to play this jingle. From her childhood she had justified the appellation. Beneath her costly robes, and the jewels which adorned them, she wore the penitential girdle; and vain were the efforts of countless suitors to win a heart already devoted to the Heavenly Bridegroom. The fame of her piety reached the ears, and touched the heart, of Francis. She admired the lustre of his sanctity. The mutual attraction was felt and acknowledged. They met, conferred, and met again. By his advice an elopement from the house of her parents was arranged, and by his assistance it was effected. They fled to the Porzioncula. Monks, chanting their matins by torch-light, received and welcomed her there; and then, attended by her spiritual guide, she took sanctuary in the neighbouring church of St. Paul, until arrangements could be made for her reception in a convent. The heroine of the romance was



in her nineteenth, the hero in his thirtieth, year. Yet she was not an Eloisa, but only one of those young ladies (all good angels guard them!) by whom the ether of sacerdotal eloquence cannot be safely inhaled in private. He was not an Abelard, but only one of those ghostly counsellors (all good angels avert them!) who would conduct souls to heaven, by the breach of the earliest and most sacred of the duties which He who reigns there has laid upon us. Such, indeed, was the superiority of Francis to any prejudice in favour of filial obedience and parental authority, that, despite the agony and the rage of her father, and the efforts of his armed retainers, he induced her two sisters, Agnes and Beatrice, to follow her flight, and to partake of her seclusion. The shears which severed the clustering locks of Agnes, were held, we are assured, by his own consecrated hands.

So bewitching an example was, of course, fatal to many other flowing tresses, and to the serenity of the heads they covered. The church of St. Damiano, which the zeal of Francis had reconstructed, became the convent of the order of poor sisters. Monks cannot cease to be men; and, in their silent cells, the hearts of the Minor brethren throbbed to learn that their cravings for woman's sympathy were thus, at least, partially satisfied. Under the guidance of the ladies of the house of Ortolana, and the legislation of their common founder, colonies of this devout sisterhood were rapidly settled in all the chief cities of Europe; and Clara, the disobedient and the devout, being elected the first abbess of the order, performed, as we are assured, miracles of self-conquest in her lifetime, and miracles of mercy in her tomb.

At the summit of his hopes, Francis surveyed the path which yet lay before him; but his spirit fainted at the prospect. Renown, influence, supremacy, had gathered round him; but his soul was oppressed with the responsibilities of trusts so weighty, and for the use of which he was wholly unprepared by any literary or theological education. In words which he ascribes to Francis himself, St. Bonaventura depicts the conflict of his mind on the grave question, whether, by a life of solitary devotion, or by a life of apostolic labours, he should best fulfil the Divine counsels. If the quotation of his language be accurate, it is evident that he inclined to the more active choice, but dreaded to oppose to the wisdom of his age, the foolishness of such preaching as his untaught mind, and unpractised tongue, could utter. If the difficulty itself is characteristic of him, the escape from it is still more so.

Sylvester, one of his associates at the Rivo Torto, still remained in the adjacent mountains, a hermit absorbed in devotion. To him, and to Clara, Francis despatched injunctions to ascertain what was



the pleasure of the great Head of the Church on this momentous question. The answers of the hermit and of the abbess were the same. To each it had been revealed that the founder of their order should go forth and preach the Gospel. God, they assured him, would put words into his mouth. To receive their joint message he knelt on the earth; his head bare and bowed down, his hands crossed over his breast. On hearing it he vaulted from the ground, crying, "Let us go forth in the name of the Lord!" At his first appearance as a preacher, we are told that burning eloquence burst from his lips, diseases fled at his touch, sinners abandoned their vices, and crowds flocked into his order. Every day witnessed the increase of the numbers and zeal of his proselytes; until, on the 30th of May, 1216, a goodly company, constituting the first chapter of the order of the Minor brethren, had assembled at the Porzioncula.

This convention was rendered memorable in their annals by the apportionment which was then made of the Christian world into so many Franciscan missions. For himself the founder reserved the kingdom of France, as the noblest and most arduous province. Tuscany, Lombardy, Provence, Spain, and Germany were assigned to five of his principal followers. Such were now their numbers that thirty-four departed for Provence, and no less than sixty found their way to the Empire. The land of the Glibellines, the future birth-place of Luther, formed, however, even in the thirteenth century, an exception to the welcome with which, in other parts of Europe, these new emissaries of Rome were enthusiastically received. Of the itinerants along the banks of the Rhine and the Danube, not one could make himself intelligible in the German tongue. Destitute of the ever ready resource of miracle (it is difficult to conjecture why), they could not convince a people with whom they could not communicate; and were driven away with ridicule and outrage.

The French mission received a yet more unexpected check. To place this great undertaking under the special care of St. Peter and St. Paul, Francis had commenced his missionary journey by visiting their sepulchres. Rome had, at that time, received another, and not less memorable, guest, since known in the calendar of the saints by the name of Dominick. He was a Spaniard, the member of a noble house, a man of letters, and a priest. Amid the horrors of the crusade against the Albigenses, and while himself deeply stained with that blood-guiltiness, he had preached repentance, and inculcated orthodoxy. And now, a sojourner in the metropolis of Christendom, he saw in a vision Christ himself possessed with wrath against mankind (so well agreed his sleeping and his

waking thoughts), and then appeared to him the Virgin mother, appeasing her son by presenting to him two men, in one of whom the dreamer saw his own image. The other was a stranger to him. When, with the return of light, he repaired to a neighbouring church to worship, that stranger appeared there in the garb of a mendicant. "My brother, my companion," exclaimed the Spaniard, "let us unite our powers, and nothing shall prevail against us;" and forthwith the founders of the Dominican and Franciscan orders were in each other's arms. They met again at the palace of the Cardinal Ugolino. He proposed to them the elevation of some of their followers to the episcopacy, and even to the Sacred College. The offer was declined by both. Another ineffectual proposal was made by Dominick himself for the union of their separate institutes; and then, with earnest professions of mutual regard, and assurances of mutual support, they parted to divide the world between them.

To secure his share of that empire, Francis, however, found it necessary to abandon his contemplated mission to France. The sagacity of Ugolino had detected the intrigues and secret machinations of the enemies of this new spiritual power; and his authority induced the founder of it to remain at Rome, to counteract them. Subtlety, the tutelary genius of his country, and his natural ally on such an occasion, abandoned Francis on this, as on so many other exigencies, to the charge of the gentler power, Somnus; who, throwing open the ivory gates, exhibited to him, first a hen, attempting in vain to gather her chickens under her wings, and then a majestic bird, gently alighting to spread her far-extended plumage over the unprotected brood. The interpretation was obvious. The Pope must be persuaded to appoint Ugolino to the office of protector of the unfledged nestlings of the Franciscan eyrie.

But Innocent was now dead; and the third Honorius, a stranger to Francis, and studiously prepossessed against him, filled the papal throne. The cardinal proposed that the suitor for this new favour should win it by preaching in the sacred consistory; persuaded that the eloquence for which he was renowned must triumph over all opposing prejudices. Great were the throes of preparation. A sermon, composed with the utmost skill of the preacher, was engraven, with his utmost diligence, on his memory. But at the sight of that august audience, every trace of it departed from his mind; leaving him in utter confusion, and, as it seemed, in hopeless silence. A pause, a mental prayer, and one vehement self-conflict followed; and then, abandoning himself to the natural current of his own ardent emotions, he poured forth his soul, in an

address so full of warmth and energy, as to extort from the Pope, and the whole college, the exclamation that it was not he that spake, but the divinity which spoke within him. From such lips no request could be preferred in vain; and Ugolino was nominated by Honorius to the high and confidential post of Protector of the Minorite brethren.

In the month of May, 1219 (the tenth year of the Franciscan æra), the inhabitants of Assisi looked from their walls on a vast encampment surrounding the Porzioncula as a centre, and spreading over the wide plain on which the city stands. Five thousand mendicants had there met together to celebrate the second general chapter of their Order. Huts of straw and mud afforded them shelter. The piety of the neighbouring towns and villages supplied them with food. Each group, or company, of sixty or a hundred, formed a distinct congregation, offering up prayers in common, or listening to discourses of which the future conquest of the world was the theme. Then, at the word, and under the guidance, of their chief, the separate bands, forming themselves into one long procession, advanced with solemn chants, or in still more solemn silence, to the city of Perugia. There Ugolino met them, and, casting off his purple mantle, his hat, and his shoes, was conducted by his exulting clients, in the dress of a Minor brother, to the place of their great assembly. "Behold," exclaimed the astonished patron, to the founder of the order, "behold the camp of God! How goodly are thy tents, O Israel, and thy dwellings, O Jacob!"

The words fell mournfully on the ear of Francis. As his eyes scanned the triumphs of that auspicious hour, sadness brooded over his soul. He felt, like other conquerors, that the laurel wreath is too surely entwined with cypress; and drew dark forebodings of decay even from the unexpected rapidity of his success. Brief, therefore, and melancholy, was his answer to the Cardinal's congratulations. "We have made," he said, "large promises; we have received yet larger. Let us accomplish the one; and aspire after the fulfilment of the other. These pleasures are brief. There are pains which are eternal. Our sufferings are light; but there is a far more exceeding weight of glory. Many are called, few are chosen. To each man there shall be a recompence according to his works. Above all things, my brethren, love the holy Church, and pray for her exaltation. But cling to poverty. Is it not written, cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall nourish thee?"

Again the heart of Ugolino throbbed as he surveyed the multitude devoted to works of mercy and of self-denial; and he commended, while he blessed, them. Again was raised the sterner voice of their

spiritual father, rebuking the soft weakness with which they had welcomed, and enjoyed such unmerited praise. Pained and mortified, the Cardinal asked the motive of this ill-timed severity. "My lord, I have reproved them," was the answer, "that they may not lose the lowliness you have been extolling: and that humility may strike her roots the more deeply into their hearts."

Unfamiliar as he was with the subtleties, scholastic or politic, of his age, Francis was a keen observer of the characters and the ways of men. He discovered that the zealous protector of his order was a still more zealous member of the Roman conclave; and that, to attach the foremost of the Minor brethren to the cause and service of the Papacy, he had dazzled their eyes with prospects of mitres, and even of the purple. He also discovered that they had conferred with the Cardinal on their own exclusion from the government of the society, on the want both of health and of learning in their head, and on the excessive rigour and singularity of his rule. He saw in these Dathans and Abirams of his camp the rising spirit of revolt, and he proceeded at once to subdue it with his accustomed energy. The chapter of the Order was in session; when, conducting Ugolino thither, Francis addressed to them, and to him, these stern and menacing words; "My brethren, God has commanded me, in foolishness and humility, to copy the foolishness of the cross. Let me hear of no other rule than that which He has thus established. Dread the Divine vengeance, all ye who abandon it, all ye who seduce others to backslide." The silence which followed on this apostrophe, and on the departure of the speaker, was at length broken by the Cardinal. He exhorted the congregation to obey implicitly their apostolic founder; on whom, he declared, the Divine influence was evidently resting. Evident, at least, it had become, that the day of secular greatness could not dawn on the children of Poverty till her spouse should have ceased to govern them.

To divert their minds from such disloyal thoughts, Francis occupied them with the promulgation of rules respecting the worship of the Virgin, of Peter and of Paul, and the structure of their ecclesiastical edifices. To elicit their loyal affections, he laid before them a project for the spiritual conquest of the whole habitable globe. For himself he reserved the seat of the war between the crusaders and the Saracens. To each of his foremost disciples he assigned a separate mission; and he dismissed them with letters from the Pope, commending them to the care of all ecclesiastical dignitaries, and with a circular epistle from himself, bearing this superscription: "To all Potentates, Governors, Consuls, Judges, and Magistrates on the earth; and to all others to whom these presents shall come, brother Francis, your unworthy



servant in the Lord, sendeth greeting and peace." Armed with these credentials the propagandists of Assisi dispersed; some to found monasteries in Spain, some to preach the Gospel in the Empire, some to rival the socialists of France, some to become professors at Oxford, and some to provoke martyrdom in Morocco; but never again to be convened by their "General Minister" to consult together in a deliberative chapter. It was an experiment too hazardous for repetition; a risk to be dreaded far more than any which awaited him among the warriors of the crescent, or the champions of the cross.

These were now drawn in hostile array under the walls of Damietta, and there he joined them. The confusion of the camp of Agramante was but a feeble image of that which he found in the host of the titular King of Jerusalem, John de Brienne;—cavaliers and foot-men, all emulous of fame, all impatient of obedience, all insisting on being led into action, all interchanging bitter contumelies, and all willing to cut each other's throats, if no better employment could be found for their swords. Like another Micaiah, Francis foretold the disastrous results of a combat about to be waged, under the shelter of holy names, but in the wanton insolence of human passion. Like him he saw all Israel scattered like sheep upon the mountains; and like him he prophesied in vain. The mutinous troops hurried their leader into the field; and the loss of six thousand of the Christians attested the foresight of their unwarlike monitor.

In the midst of feats of arms, and agonies of toils and suffering, admonition was, however, an office too humble to satisfy the desires of a soul cast in a mould so heroic as his. He was a strategist as well as a saint; and, in this day of sorrow and rebuke, found a meet occasion to exhibit the whole strength of his belligerent resources. During many successive hours, he knelt and was absorbed in prayer. Then rising with a countenance radiant with joy and courage, he advanced towards the infidel camp; chanting as he marched, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." A gold besant was the price of the head of a Christian. But what were such terrors to an evangelist about to close the war by the conversion of the Soldan himself? From every incident he drew fresh confidence. When he saw the flocks collected for the consumption of the Saracens, "Behold," he cried, "I send you forth as sheep among wolves." When seized by the Saracens themselves, and asked by whom, and why, he had been sent to "their lines," he answered, "I am not sent of man, but of God, to show you the way of salvation." When carried before their chief, and courteously

invited to remain in his tent, "Yes," he exclaimed, "I will remain, if you and your people will become converts for the love of Jesus Christ. If you hesitate, kindle a furnace, and I and your priests will enter it together; and the result shall show you whether truth is on my side or on theirs." The most venerable of the Imauns shuddered and withdrew; and the smiling Commander of the Faithful avowed his doubt whether he could find a priest to encounter the ordeal. "Only promise to become a Christian," replied Francis, "and I will enter the furnace alone; but if I should be burnt, conclude, not that my message is false, but only that it has reached you by one who, bearing it unworthily, is justly punished for his sins." Still obdurate, but still courteous, the infidel chief offered rich presents to his stout-hearted visitor; and then, with a guard of honour, and a safe conduct, dismissed him to the Christian camp.

That the head of the missionary was neither bartered for a gold besant by the soldiers, nor amputated by the scimitar of their leader, may be explained either by the oriental reverence for supposed insanity, or by the universal reverence for self-denying courage, or by the motives which induced the lion to lie quietly down, and turn his tail on the drawn sword, and eloquent taunts, of the Knight of La Mancha. To the Eagle of Meaux, however, this adventure presents itself in a more brilliant light. "François," he exclaims, "indigné de se voir ainsi respecté par les ennemis de son maître, recommence ses invectives contre leur religion monstrueuse; mais, étrange et merveilleuse insensibilité! ils ne lui témoignent pas moins de déférence; et le brave athlète de Jésus-Christ, voyant qu'il ne pouvait mériter qu'ils lui donnassent la mort: 'Sortons d'ici, mon frère,' disait-il à son compagnon, 'fuyons, fuyons bien loin de ces barbares, trop humains pour nous, puisque nous ne les pouvons obliger, ni à adorer notre maître, ni à nous persécuter; nous qui sommes ses serviteurs. Oh Dieu! quand mériterons-nous le triomphe de martyr si nous ne trouvons que des-honneurs, même parmi les peuples les plus infidèles? Puisque Dieu ne nous juge pas dignes de la grâce du martyr, ni de participer à ses glorieux opprobes, allons-nous-en, mon frère; allons achever notre vie dans le martyr de la pénitence, ou cherchons quelque endroit de la terre où nous puissions boire à longs traits l'ignominie de la croix.'"

Such places were readily found. In Spain, in Provence, and in Northern Italy, Francis everywhere preached to crowds hanging on his lips; and though the ignominy of the cross may have been his theme, it must be confessed that the admiration of mankind was his habitual reward. But amidst the applause of the world, his

heart yearned after his native Umbria, where his Order had first struggled into sight, and where it was now to receive its final development.

In his missions through Europe he had discovered that his institutes of Minor brethren, and of poor sisters, bound to celibacy, to poverty, and to obedience, were erected on a basis far too narrow for the universal empire at which he aimed. Marriage was inconsistent with the first of these vows, worldly callings with the second, and secular dignities with the last. But though wives, and trades, and lordships were incompatible with "perfection," they might be reconciled with admission into a lower or third estate of his Order, where, as in the court of the Gentiles, those might worship to whom a nearer approach to the sanctuary was interdicted. With the design of thus throwing open the vestibule of the temple to the uninitiated, a supplemental code was promulgated, in the year 1221, for what was to be called "The Order of Penitence."

The members of it were to take no vows whatever. Engaging to submit themselves to certain rules of life, it was *agreed* that the breach of those rules should not involve the guilt of mortal sin. They required the restitution of all unjust gains, a reconciliation with all enemies, and obedience to the commands of God and of the Church. The members of the Order were to wear a mean and uniform dress. Their houses and furniture were to be plain and frugal, though not without consulting the proprieties of their social rank. All luxuriousness in animal delights, and all the lusts of the eye, were to be mortified; all theatres, feasts, and worldly amusements eschewed. Their disputes were to be settled, with all possible promptitude, by compromises or by arbitrament. Every member of the Order was to make his will. They were never to take a nonjudicial oath, nor to bear arms, *except in defence of the Church, the Catholic faith, or their native land.*

The founder of such a confederacy must have had some of the higher moral instincts of a legislator. It would be difficult even now, with all the aid of history and philosophy, to devise a scheme better adapted to restrain the licentiousness, to soften the manners, and to mitigate all the oppressions of an iron age. Secular men and women were combined with ardent devotees, in one great society, under a code flexible as it addressed the one, and inexorable as it applied to the other, of those classes; and yet a code, which imposed on all the same general obligations, the same undivided allegiance, the same ultimate ends, and many of the same external badges. Christianity itself, when first promulgated, must to heathen eyes have had an aspect not wholly unlike that which originally distinguished the third estate of the Franciscan Orders;

and rapid as may have been the corruption and decline of that estate, it would be mere prejudice or ignorance to deny that it sustained an important office in the general advancement of civilisation and of truth.

In the times of Francis himself and of his immediate successors, the Franciscan cord (the emblem of the restraint in which the soul of man is to hold the Beast to which it is wedded) was to be seen on countless multitudes; in the market-place, in the universities, in the tribunals, and even on the throne. In the camp it was still more frequent; for there was much latent significance in the exceptional terms by which the general prohibition of military service had been qualified for the members of the Order of Penitence. In the early part of the thirteenth century "the defence of the Church, of the Catholic faith, and of their native land," was, to Italian ears, an intelligible periphrasis for serving either under the standard of the cross against the Albigenses, or under the standard of the Guelphs against the Ghibellines; and the third estate of the Minorites formed an enthusiastic, patriotic, and religious chivalry, which the Pope could direct at pleasure against either his theological or his political antagonists.

And now it remained that Francis should receive the appropriate rewards of the services which he had rendered to Rome, to the world, and to the Church—to Rome, in surrounding her with new and energetic allies; to the world, in creating a mighty corporation formidable to baronial and to mitred tyrants; to the Church, in supplying her with a noble army of evangelists, who braved every danger, and endured every privation, to diffuse throughout Christendom such light as they themselves possessed. The debt was acknowledged and paid by each.

In the bitterness of his heart Francis was weeping over the sins of mankind, in the shrine of St. Mary of Angels, when a revelation was made to him, which, though described with ease and familiarity by a host of Catholic writers, the weaker faith, or the greater reverence, of Protestantism cannot venture to paint with the same minuteness. All that can be decorously stated is, that the Virgin mother, her attendant angels, her Divine Son, and Francis their devout worshipper, are exhibited by the narrative as interlocutors in a sort of melodramatic action; which terminates in a promise from the Redeemer, that all who should visit that church, and confess themselves to a priest there, should receive a plenary remission from the guilt and punishment of all their sins; "provided" (such is the singular qualification of the promise) "that this general indulgence be ratified by him whom I have authorised to bind and to loose on earth."



On the following day, Francis was on his knees before the Pope at Perugia. "Holy Father," he began, "some years ago I reconstructed a little church on your domain. Grant, I implore you, to all pilgrims resorting thither, a plenary indulgence, and exempt the building from the imposts usually consequent on the grant of such privileges." "For how many years," said the Pontiff, "do you desire the indulgence to be given?" "Give me not years," replied the suitor, "but souls, (*da mihi non annos, sed animos*,) and let all who enter the church of Saint Mary of Angels in contrition, and who are there absolved by a priest, receive a full remission of their sins in this life, and in the life to come." "A vast gift, and contrary to all custom," observed the parsimonious dispenser of salvation. "But, Holy Father, I make the request not in my own name, but in the name of Christ, who has sent me to you." "Then be it so," exclaimed the Pope; "but I limit to one day in each year the enjoyment of this advantage." The grateful Francis rose, bowed low his head, and was retiring, when the voice of the Pope was again heard. "Simpleton, whither are you going? What evidence do you carry with you of the grant which you have been soliciting?" "Your word," replied the single-hearted suitor. "If this indulgence be of God, let the blessed Virgin be the charter, Christ the notary, and the Angels the witnesses. I desire no other."

The traveller who in our own day visits Assisi, finds himself surrounded by a population of about three thousand souls; and amidst the thirty churches and monasteries which attract his eye, he distinguishes, as pre-eminent above them all, the *Sagro Convento*, where repose the ashes of Saint Francis. It is a building of the sixteenth century, extending over the summit of a gentle eminence at the base of the Apennines. A double row of gigantic arches, resembling two vast aqueducts, the lower of which forms the basis of the higher, sustains a sumptuous terrace, which stands out against the evening sky, like the battlements of some impregnable fortress. The luxuriant gardens, and the rich meadows below, watered by a stream which gushes out from the adjacent mountains, encircle the now splendid church of St. Mary of Angels; where may still be traced the *Porzioncula* in which Francis worshipped, and the crypt in which his emaciated body was committed to the dust. And there also, on each returning year, may be seen the hardy mountaineers of Umbria, and the graceful peasants of Tuscany, and the solemn processions of the Franciscan orders, and the long array of civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries, waiting till the chimes of the ancient clocks of the holy convent shall announce the advent

of the day in which their sins are to be loosed on earth, and their pardon sealed in heaven.

Why demand the reasons of this, or of any other part of a religious system which presupposes the renunciation of all reason? The promise given to Francis by the Saviour, and ratified by His Vicar, was precise and definite. It insured a plenary remission of sin to all who should visit the hallowed Porzioncula with contrite hearts, and there receive priestly absolution. The promise, as interpreted by the eloquent Bourdaloue, seems equally absolute. From his sermon, "*Sur la fête de notre Dame des Anges*," we learn that indulgences granted by the Pope may, after all, turn out to be worthless; since the cause of the gift may be insufficient, or some other essential condition may have been neglected. But *in this case*, the indulgence, having been granted directly by Christ himself, must, (says the great preacher,) be infallible; for He must have known the extent of His own power, and must have been guided by eternal wisdom, and must be superior to all law in the free dispensation of His gifts.

Pause, nevertheless, all ye who meditate a pilgrimage to Assisi, in quest of this divine panacea! Put not your trust in Bourdaloue, but listen to the more subtle doctor of our own days, M. Chavin de Malan. From him you will learn that to all these large and free promises is attached yet another tacit condition; and that unless you renounce all sin, venial as well as mortal, unless the very desire to transgress have perished in your souls, unless your hearts be free from the slightest wish, the most transient voluntary attachment, towards any forbidden thing, you may be members of all religious orders, and join in all their pilgrimages and devotions, but the plenary indulgence shall never be yours. Pilgrims to Assisi! if such be *not* your happy state, it boots not to go thither. If such be your condition, why roam over this barren earth to find the heaven which is yours already?

Equivocal as the benefit of the papal reward may have been, the recompence which the world rendered, by the hands of Orlando, Lord of Chiusi de Casentino, was at least substantial. At a solemn festival, at which the knight had made his profession of arms, Francis had pronounced the usual benediction on the symbols of his chivalry. Much discourse ensued on the spiritual state and prospects of this militant member of the church, when the grateful, and not improvident, Orlando, for the good of his soul, bestowed on the founder and the companions of the order of Minor brethren, Monte del Alvernia, a tract of land amidst the highest summits of the Tuscan Apennines, now called Lavernia. It was a wild and sequestered region, covered with heath and rocks, and the primæval

forest, and eminently adapted for a life of penitence. It became the favourite retreat of its new owners, and especially of their chief. Yet even in these solitudes he was not exempt from some grave inconveniences. By night, malignant demons afflicted him, dragging his defenceless body along the ground, and bruising him with cruel blows. When the sun burnt fiercely over his head, Orlando appeared with food, and with offers to erect cells and dormitories for the hermits, and to supply all their temporal wants, that they might surrender themselves wholly to prayer and meditation. But neither the enmity of the demons, nor the allurements of their unconscious ally, could seduce Francis from his fidelity to his wedded wife. In her society he wandered through the woods and caverns of Alvernia; relying for support on Him alone by whom the ravens are fed, and awakening the echoes of the mountains by his devout songs and fervent ejaculations.

It remained only that the Church, in the person of her eternal Head, should requite the services of her great reformer. The too familiar legend must be briefly told; for every one who would cherish in himself, or in others, the reverence due to the Holy and the Awful, must shrink from the approach to such a topic, and be unwilling to linger on it.

On the annual festival of Saint Michael the archangel, for the year 1224, Francis and Leoni, a member of his order, went together to worship at a church which had then been erected on Mount Alvernia. The *sortes sanctorum* were again consulted, by thrice opening the gospels, which lay upon the altar. On each occasion the volume presented to their eyes the history of the passion; and the coincidence was accepted by Francis as ominous of some great event which was about to happen to himself.

The hour arrived of the "holy sacrifice;" when, as though to symbolise his disgust for earth, and his aspirations to heaven, the body of the saint slowly ascended heavenwards. When it had reached the ordinary height of a man, the feet were embraced and bathed with tears by Leoni, who stood beneath. Gradually it mounted beyond the range of human vision; but even then his voice was heard in discourse with the Invisible, and a bright radiance attested the presence of the Redeemer. He was made manifest to the eye of his enraptured worshipper, in the form of a seraph moving on rapid wings, though fastened to a cross; and when the whole scene passed away, it was found that, by radiations from this celestial figure, the body of Francis, like wax beneath the pressure of a seal, had acquired the sacred stigmata—that is, on either hand, and on either foot, marks exactly corresponding with

the two opposite extremities of a rude iron nail; and on the side, a wound such as might have been inflicted by a spear.

This stupendous event happened on the 17th September, a day still consecrated by the Church to the perpetual commemoration of it. No Christian, therefore, may doubt it; for St. Thomas, and all other theologians, assure us, that to doubt a "canonical fact," is rash, scandalous, and open to the just suspicion of heresy. Yet scepticism on the subject appears to have been of very early growth. Within thirteen years from the date of the occurrence, a Dominican preacher at Oppaw in Moravia, and the Bishop of Olmutz, had both published their utter disbelief of the whole story, and had condemned the propagation of it as sinful. For this audacious presumption, however, Ugolino, who then filled the papal throne under the title of Gregory the Ninth, addressed to both of them reproachful letters, which sufficiently attest his own faith in the prodigy. In the dense cloud of corroborative witnesses may be distinguished his successor, Pope Alexander the Fourth; who, in a still extant bull, denounces the severest penalties on all gainsayers. Indeed, if Saint Bonaventura may be believed, Alexander went further still, and was used to declare that he had with his own eyes seen and admired the stigmata. And M. Chavin de Malan is ready to abandon his reliance on all human testimony, if any one can convince him of the insufficiency of that on which his faith in this miracle reposes.

When the fishermen of Jordan shall have learnt how to stay her swellings with their nets, it will be time to encounter the soaring enthusiasm of M. Chavin de Malan by the cobwebs of human logic. When geometricians shall have ascertained the colour of the circle, we may hope to arrive at an understanding with him as to the meaning of the terms in which he disputes. When critics shall have demonstrated, from the odes of Pindar, the polarisation of Light, he and we may be of one mind as to the laws by which our belief should be governed. Meanwhile, his rebukes for the hardness of our hearts shall not be repelled by any imputations touching the softness of his head. He and his fellow-worshippers regard it as eminently probable, that He by whom this universal frame of things has been created and sustained, should descend to this earth, to act so strange a part as they assign to Him in so grotesque a drama as that of Mount Alvernia. If we could adopt the same opinion, we might, with them, give some heed even to the scanty, and most suspicious, evidence on which these marvels rest. One prodigy, indeed, connected with this tale, we receive with implicit conviction and profound astonishment. It is, that in the city in which Louis Philippe was then reigning, in which



Guizot and Thierry were writing, and in which Cousin was delivering his lectures, there arose two learned historians, who, with impassioned eloquence, and unhesitating faith, reproduced a legend which would have been rejected as extravagant by the novelists to whom we owe the "Arabian Nights," and as profane by the authors with whom Don Quixote was familiar.

Francis did not long survive the revelation of Mount Alvernia. Exhausted by vigils, by fastings, and by fatigue, he retired to Assisi. Leoni accompanied him. As they approached the city, the increasing weakness of the saint compelled him to seek the unwonted relief of riding. But as his companion followed behind, Francis divined his thoughts. In early life they had often journeyed together over the same road; the one ever conscious of his noble birth, the other never allowed to forget that his father was but a merchant. The contrast of the past and the present was too powerful to both of the travellers. Faint as he was, Francis dismounted from the ass which bore him: declaring that he could not retain the saddle while one so much his superior in rank was on foot.

He reached at length a hut near the convent of St. Damiano, where, under the care of Clara and her poor sisters, he found a temporary repose. Twelve months of utter incapacity for exertion followed. They were passed in the monastery of St. Mary of Angels. The autumn brought with it some brief intermission of his sufferings; and again his voice was heard throughout Umbria, preaching, as his custom was, in words few, simple, and pathetic; and when unable to teach by words, he presented himself, and gazed with earnest tenderness on the crowds who thronged to receive his benediction and to touch his garments.

In this his last mission, a woman of Bagnarea brought to him her infant to be healed. Francis laid his hands on the child, who recovered; and who afterwards, under the name of Bonaventura, became his biographer, the general minister of his order, a cardinal, a theologian, and a saint.

At the approach of death, Francis felt and acknowledged the horror common to all men, and especially to men of irritable nerves and delicate organisation. But such feelings promptly yielded to his habitual affiance in the Divine love, and to his no less habitual affection for all in whom he recognised the regenerate image of the Divine nature. Among these was the Lady Jacoba di Settesoli; and to her he dictated a letter, requesting her immediate presence with a winding-sheet for his body, and tapers for his funeral, and with the cakes she had been used to give him during his illness at Rome. Then pausing, he bade his amanuensis tear

the letter, expressing his conviction that Jacoba was at hand. She appeared; and so deep was her emotion as to have suggested to the bystanders (to whom apparently her existence had till then been unknown) the vague and oppressive sense of some awful mystery. It may, however, be reasonably supposed that the anguish of Jacoba was nothing else than the natural expression of that intense and perfect sympathy to which the difference of sex is essential, to which none but the pure in heart can ever attain, and which, with no failure of respect to so great a man, may therefore be supposed to have glowed in his bosom as warmly as in hers.

Her cakes were again eaten by the sick man; but without any abatement of his malady. Elia, who, during his illness, had acted as general minister of his order, and Bernard de Quintavalle, his first proselyte, were kneeling before him. To each of them he gave a part of one of the cakes of Jacoba; and then crossing his arms so as to bring his right hand over the head of Bernard, (whose humility had chosen the left or inferior position,) he solemnly blessed them both, and bequeathed to Bernard the government of the whole Franciscan society. He then dictated his last will, in which the rules he had already promulgated were explained and enforced, and his followers were solemnly commended to the guidance and the blessing of the Most High.

His last labour done, he was laid, in obedience to his own command, on the bare ground. The evening, we are told, was calm, balmy, and peaceful; the western sky glowing with the mild and transparent radiance which follows the setting of an autumnal sun behind the lofty hills of central Italy. At that moment the requiem for the dying ceased, as the faltering voice of Francis was heard, in the language of David, exclaiming, "*Voce meâ ad Dominum clamavi!*" His attendants bent over him as he pursued the divine song, and caught his last breath as he uttered, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks unto Thy name."

Some there are, total strangers to man's interior life, who find for themselves in the objects of concupiscence a living tomb; these are the sensual and the worldly. Some, for whom the world within is detached from the world without them by hard, sharp, clear lines of demarcation; these are the men of practical ability. Some, who, from every idol of the theatre, fashion to themselves some idol of the cavern; these are the votaries of poetry or art. Some, to whom all substantial things are permanently eclipsed by the imagery of the brain; these are the insane. And some, to whom every cherished idea of their minds gives assurance of a corresponding objective reality; these are the mystics and enthu-

siasts — men of an amphibious existence — inhabitants alternately of the world of shadows, and of the world of solidities — their dreams passing into action, their activity subsiding into dreams — a byword to the sensual and the worldly, an enigma to the practical, a study to the poet, and not rarely ending as fellow-prisoners with the insane.

To this small section of the human family belonged Francis of Assisi; a mere self-contradiction to those who beheld him incuriously; in one aspect a playful child, in the next a gloomy Anchorite; an arch smile of drollery stealing at times across features habitually sacred to sorrow and devotion; passing from dark forebodings into more than human ecstasies; a passionate lover of nature, yet living by choice in crowds and cities; at once an erotic worshipper, and a proficient in the practical business of the religious state; outstripping in his transcendental raptures the pursuit of criticism and conjecture, and yet drawing up codes and canons with all the precision of a notary.

The reconciliation of all this was not, however, hard to find. Francis was an absolute prodigy of faith; and especially of faith in himself. Whatever he saw in the *camera lucida* of his own mind, he received implicitly as the genuine reflection of some external reality. Every metaphor with which he dallied, became to him an actual personage, to be loved or to be hated. It was scarcely as a fiction that he wooed Poverty as his wife. Each living thing was a brother or a sister to him, in a sense which almost ceased to be figurative. To all inanimate beings he ascribed a personality and a sentient nature, in something more than a sport of fancy. At every step of his progress, celestial visitants hovered round him; announcing their presence sometimes in visible forms, sometimes in audible voices. The Virgin mother was the lady of his heart; her attendant angels but so many knights companions in his spiritual chivalry; the Church a bride in glorious apparel; and her celestial Spouse the object of a passion which acknowledged no restraint either in the vehemence of spirit with which it was cherished, or in the fondness of the language in which it was expressed. It was inevitable that the inhabitant of such a world as this, should have manifested himself to the vulgar denizens of earth in ceaseless contrasts and seeming incongruities; so essential were the differences between the ever-varying impulses on which *he* soared, and the unvarying motives in the strength of which *they* plodded.

Though Bonaventura was but a child at the death of Francis, he possessed and diligently used the means of studying his character, and has laboured in the following passage, with more earnestness than perspicuity, to depict his interior life: —

“Who can form a conception of the fervour and the love of Francis, the friend of Christ? you would have said that he was burnt up by Divine love, like charcoal in the flames. As often as his thoughts were directed to that subject, he was excited as if the chords of his soul had been touched by the plectrum of an inward voice. But as all lower affections elevated him to this love of the supreme, he yielded himself to the admiration of every creature which God has formed; and from the summit of this observatory of delights he watched the causes of all things, as they unfolded themselves to him under living forms. Among the beautiful objects of nature, he selected the most lovely; and, in the forms of created things, he sought out, with ardour, whatever appeared especially captivating; rising from one beauty to another as by a ladder, with which he scaled to the highest and the most glorious.”

Birds, insects, plants, and fishes, are variously regarded, according to the temper of the observer, in a culinary, a scientific, a picturesque, or a poetical point of view. To Francis of Assisi they were friends, kinsmen, and even congregations. Doves were his especial favourites. He gathered them into his convents, laid them in his bosom, taught them to eat out of his hand, and pleased himself with talking of them as so many chaste and faithful brethren of the order. In the lark which sprung up before his feet, he saw a Minorite sister, clad in the Franciscan colour; who, like a true Franciscan, despised the earth, and soared towards heaven with thanksgivings for her simple diet. When a nest of those birds fought for the food he brought them, he not only rebuked their inhumanity, but prophesied their punishment. His own voice rose with that of the nightingale in rural vespers; and at the close of their joint thanksgivings, he praised, and fed, and blessed his fellow-worshipper. “My dear sisters,” he exclaimed to some starlings who chattered round him as he preached, “you have talked long enough, it is my turn now; listen to the word of your Creator, and be quiet.” The very sermon addressed by the saint to such an audience, yet lives in the pages of his great biographer. “My little brothers,” it began, “you should love and praise the Author of your being, who has clothed you with plumage, and given you wings with which to fly where you will. You were the first created of all animals. He preserved your race in the ark. He has given the pure atmosphere for your dwelling-place. You sow not, neither do you reap. Without any care of your own, He gives you lofty trees to build your nests in, and watches over your young. Therefore give praise to your bountiful Creator.”

The well-known instinct by which irrational animals discover



and attach themselves to their rational friends, was exhibited whenever Francis came abroad. The wild falcon wheeled and fluttered round him. The leveret sought rather to attract than to escape his notice. The half-frozen bees crawled to him in winter time to be fed. A lamb followed him even into the city of Rome; and was playfully cherished there by Jacoba di Settesoli under the name of a Minor brother.

These natural incidents became, in the hands of his monkish biographers, so many miracles fit only for the nursery. Let us not, however, upbraid them. Without apology, as without doubt, M. Chavin de Malan, in the year 1845, and from the city of Paris, informs us, that when Francis addressed his feathered congregation they stretched out their necks to imbibe his precepts; — that, at his bidding, the starlings ceased to chatter while he preached; — that in fulfilment of his predictions, the naughty larks died miserably; — that a falcon announced to him in the mountains the hour of prayer, though with gentler voice and a tardier summons, when the saint was sick; — that Jacoba was aroused to her devotions by her lamb with severe punctuality; — that an ovicidal wolf, being rebuked by this ecclesiastical Orpheus for his carnivorous deeds, placed his paw in the hand of his monitor in pledge of his future good behaviour, and, like a wolf of honour, never more indulged himself in mutton. Yet M. Chavin de Malan is writing a learned and an eloquent history of the monastic orders. Such be thy gods, O Oxford!

In common with all the great Thaumaturgists of the Church of Rome, Francis had abstained from recording his own prodigies. He was too honest and too lowly. No man could less be, to himself, the centre of his own thoughts. One central object occupied them all. He was a *Pan-Christian*. He saw the outer world not merely thronged with emblems, but instinct with the presence, of the Redeemer. The lamb he fondled was the Paschal sacrifice. The worm he guarded from injury was, “the worm, and no man, the outcast of the people.” The very stones (on which he never trod irreverently) were “the chief corner-stone” of the prophet. The flowers were the “blossoms of the stem of Jesse, the perfume of which gladdens the whole earth.” The ox and the ass were his guests at a Christmas festival, which he gave in the forest not long before his death; and while they steadily ate the corn provided for them, processions of Minor brethren, and crowds of admiring spectators, listened to his discourses on the manger and the babe of Bethlehem, or joined with him in sacred carols on the nativity.

Among the *Opuscula Sancti Francisci* are four poems, in which the same mystic spirit expands itself gloriously. It must not, in-

deed, be concealed that the authenticity of these canticles has been enveloped by the critics in a chilling cloud of scepticism. The controversy is not without its interest, but could be made intelligible within no narrow limits. Suffice it then to say, that both Tiraboschi and Ginguenè acknowledge, without hesitation, the poetical claims of the saint; and that M. Delécluse, after reviewing all the evidence with judicial impartiality and acumen, concludes that the general sense, and many of the particular expressions, are his, though, in the lapse of so many ages, the style must have drifted far away from the original structure, into a form at once more modern and more ornate. In this qualified sense the following "*Canticum Solis*" may be safely read as the work of the founder of the Franciscan order:

"Altissimo onnipotente bon' Signore, tue son le laude, la gloria, lo honore, e ogni benedictione. A te solo se confanno, e nullo homo è degno de nominarti.

"Laudato sia Dio mio Signore con tutte le creature, specialmente messer lo Fratre Sole, il quale giorno e illumina noi per lui. E ello è bello e radiante con grande splendore; de te, Signore, porta significazione.

"Laudato sia mio Signore, per Suora Luna e per le stelle; il quale in cielo le hai formate chiare e belle.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per Fratre Vento e per l' Aire e Nuvole e sereno e ogni tempo, per le quale dai a tutte creature sustentamento.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per Suora Acqua, la quale è molto utile, e humile, e pretiosa, e casta.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per Fratre Fnocho, per lo quale tu allumini la notte; e ello è bello, e jocondo, e robustissimo, e forte.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per nostra Madre Terra, la quale ne sostenta, governa e produce diversi frutti, e coloriti fiori, e herbe.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per quelli che perdonano per lo tue amore, e sostengono infirmitade e tribulatione. Beati quelli che sostegneranno in pace, che de te Altissimo, saranno incoronati."

Another stanza was added in his last illness, giving thanks for "our sister, the Death of the body," the last of this strange catalogue of his kindred. Protestant reserve and English gravity alike forbid any quotations of the canticles which follow. They belong to that kind of anacreontic psalmody, in which Cupid prompts the worship of Psyche. Such a combination of the language of Paphos, with the chaste fervours of the sanctuary, can never be rendered tolerable to those who have been familiar from their childhood with the majestic composure of the Anglican liturgy, or with the solemn effusions of our Scottish church, even though it be recommended to them by the pathos of Thomas à Kempis, or by the tenderness of Fénelon.

Whoever shall undertake a collection of the facetiæ of Francis, may console himself under the inevitable result, by remembering

that he has failed only where Cicero and Bacon had failed before him. In the tragi-comedy of life, the saint, in common with all other great men, occasionally assumed the buskin; though not so much to join in the dialogue as to keep up the by-play. His jocularities were of the kind usually distinguished as practical; and, if not eminently ludicrous, were, at least, very pregnant jests. Behold him, to the unutterable amazement of his unwashed and half naked fraternity, strutting before them, on his return from Damietta, in a tunic of the finest texture, with a hood behind fashionably reaching to his middle, and a broad and rich frill in front usurping the function of clerical bands:—his head tossed up towards the sky—his voice loud and imperious—and his gait like that of a dancing master. What this strange pantomime might mean could be conjectured by none but brother Elia, whose unsubdued passion for dress had been indulged during the absence of the “general minister,” and who now saw himself thus villainously caricatured by the aid of his own finery. With his serge cloak, his sandals, and his cord, Francis resumed his wonted gravity; and the unlucky Exquisite was degraded on the spot from his charge as vicar-general. On the refusal, by another brother, of the obedience due to his chief, a grave was dug, the offender seated upright in it, and mould cast over him till it had covered his shoulders. “Art thou dead?” exclaimed Francis to the head, which alone remained above ground. “Completely,” replied the terrified monk. “Arise, then,” rejoined the saint, “go thy ways, and remember that the dead never resist any one. Let me have dead, not living followers.”

These gambols, however, were as infrequent as they were uncouth. They were but gleams of mirth, passing rapidly across a mind far more often overcast by constitutional sadness. For though Faith had reversed the natural springs of action in his mind, and revealed to him the cheat of life, and peopled his imagination with many bright and many awful forms, yet she was not attended by her usual handmaids, Peace and Hope. With a heart dead to selfish delights, and absorbed in holy and benevolent affections, he possessed neither present serenity nor anticipated joy. Cheerless and unalluring is the image of Francis of Assisi: his figure gaunt and wasted, his countenance furrowed with care, his soul hurried from one excitement to another, incapable of study, incapable of repose, forming attachments but to learn their fragility, conquering difficulties but to prove the vanity of conquest, living but to consolidate his Order of Minor brethren, and yet haunted by constant forebodings of their rapid degeneracy. Under the pressure of such solitudes and of premature disease, he in-

dulged his natural melancholy (his only self-indulgence), and gave way to tears till his eyesight had almost wholly failed him.

To his wondering disciples, these natural results of low diet, scanty dress, and ceaseless fatigue operating on a temperament so susceptible as his, appeared as so many prodigies of grace. But the admiration was not reciprocal. He saw, and vehemently reprobated their faults. Which of them should be the greatest — was debated among the Minor brethren, as once among a more illustrious fraternity; and, in imitation of Him who washed the feet of the aspiring fishermen of Galilee, Francis abdicated the government of the Order, and for awhile became himself nothing more than a Minor brother. Which of them should gather in the greatest number of female proselytes, and superintend their convents — was another competition which he watched with yet severer anxiety. He had learnt to regard his own abduction of Clara from her father's house as a sublime departure from rules which other zealots would do well to observe. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "at the moment when God forbade us wives, Satan has, I fear, given us sisters." Which of them should build the most splendid monasteries — was yet another rivalry in which he foresaw their approaching decline. "Now," he said, "it is who shall erect the finest religious edifices. The time is coming, when others of us shall build mansions fit for the great and noble of the earth. Rich and beautiful will be the dress of those architects! Well! if our brethren may but escape mortal sin, let us be satisfied." Which of them should first win the favour of ecclesiastical patrons — was an inquiry which their protector, Ugolino, had suggested; but their rising ambition was energetically denounced, by their prophet Francis, in fervent and prophetic warnings, which may be read among his yet extant predictions.

Saints and Satirists, of a day but little remote from his own, emulate each other in recording the accomplishment of these dark forebodings. At the distance of only thirty years from the death of the founder, we find Bonaventura, the greatest of his successors in the government of the Order, thus addressing his provincial ministers:—"The indolence of our brethren is laying open the path to every vice. They are immersed in carnal repose. They roam up and down everywhere, burthening every place to which they come. So importunate are their demands, and such their rapacity, that it has become no less terrible to fall in with them than with so many robbers. So sumptuous is the structure of their magnificent buildings as to bring us all into discredit. So frequently are they involved in those culpable intimacies which our rule prohibits, that suspicion, scandal, and reproach have been



excited against us." Listen again to the ardent admirer of Francis in the 22nd book of the *Paradiso*:—

So soft is flesh of mortals, that on earth  
 A good beginning doth no longer last  
 Than while an oak may bring its fruit to birth.  
 Peter began his convent without gold  
 Or silver,—I built mine by prayer and fast ;—  
 Humility for Francis won a fold.  
 If thou reflect how each began, then view  
 To what an end doth such beginning lead,  
 Thou'lt see the white assume the darkest hue.  
 Jordan driven backward, and the sea, that fled  
 At God's command, were miracles indeed  
 Greater than those here needful.—

*Wright's Dante.*

The Franciscan Order has, however, not only survived the denunciations of Bonaventura and of Dante—the banter of Erasmus—the broader scoffs of “The Letters of some Obscure Men”—the invectives of Wicliff and Luther—the taunts of Milton—the contemptuous equity of Bayle—and the eloquence, the wit, the scorn, and the resentment of half the pens of Europe; but has outlived the egregious crimes and follies of its own degenerate sons; and after six centuries still lives and flourishes; a boast of the Papal and a problem for the Protestant world. What is the principle of this protracted vitality? Whence the buoyancy, which, amidst so many storms and wrecks, has so long sustained the institute of the unlearned, half-crazy fugitive from the counting-house at Assisi?

Not even the idolaters of his name ascribe to him any profound foresight, or intuitive genius, or bold originality of thought. The eloquence for which he was renowned was no ignited logic, but a burst of contagious emotion, guided by no art, fed by no stores of knowledge, and directed by no intellectual prowess. It was the voice of a herald still repeating the same impressive tidings, not the address of an orator subjugating at once the rational and the sensitive faculties of his audience. He was rather the compiler than the inventor of the Franciscan code; and, as a legislator, is famous for only two novelties—the vow of absolute poverty, which was made but to be broken; and the reconciliation of the religious with the secular state in his Order of Penitence, which died away with the feudal oppressions and the social exigencies which, at first, sustained and nourished it.

If considered only as a part of the general system of Monasticism, the success of the Franciscan rule is, however, readily explicable. Men become monks and women nuns, sometimes from vulgar

motives ; such as fashion, the desire of mutual support, the want of a maintenance, inaptitude for more active duties, satiety of the pleasures of life, or disgust at its disappointments, parental authority, family convenience, or the like ; — sometimes from superstitious fancies ; such as the supposed sanctity of certain relics, or the expiatory value of some particular ceremonial ; — sometimes from nobler impulses ; such as the conviction that such solitude is essential to the purity of the soul of the recluse, or to the usefulness of his life ; — but always, in some degree, from other causes of still deeper root and far wider expansion. Such are, the servile spirit, which desires to abdicate the burden of free will and the responsibilities of free agency ; — and the feeble spirit which can stand erect, and make progress, only when sustained by the pressure and the impulse of a crowd ; — and the wavering spirit, which takes refuge from the pains of doubt in the contagion of monastic unanimity.

Neither is the success of the Franciscan institute, if viewed as distinct from all other conventual orders, involved in any real obscurity. So reiterated, indeed, and so just have been the assaults on the Mendicant Friars, that we usually forget that, till the days of Martin Luther, the Church had never seen so great and effectual a reform as theirs. During nearly two centuries, Francis and his spiritual descendants, chiefly, if not exclusively, directed the two great engines of the Christian warfare — the Mission and the Pulpit. Nothing in the histories of Wesley or of Whitfield, can be compared with the enthusiasm which everywhere welcomed them, or with the immediate and visible results of their labours. In an age of oligarchical tyranny they were the protectors of the weak ; in an age of ignorance the instructors of mankind ; and in an age of profligacy the stern vindicators of the holiness of the sacerdotal character, and the virtues of domestic life. While other religious societies withdrew from the world, they entered, studied, and traversed it. They were followed by the wretched, the illiterate, and the obscure, through whom, from the first, the Church has been chiefly replenished ; but not by them only. In every part of Europe, the rich, the powerful, and the learned, were found among their proselytes. In our own land Duns Scotus, Alexander Hales, Robert Grosstête, and Roger Bacon, lent to this new Christian confederacy the lustre and the authority of their names. And even when, by the natural descent of corruption, it had fallen into well-deserved contumely, still the Mission and the Pulpit, and the tradition of the great men by whom it was originally organised and nurtured, were sufficient to arrest the progress of decay, and to redeem for the

Franciscan Order a permanent and a conspicuous station among the "Princedom, Dominations, Powers," which hold their appointed rank, and perform their appropriate offices, in the great spiritual dynasty of Rome.

The tragedy of Hamlet, leaving out the character of the Prince of Denmark, the biography of Turenne, with the exception of his wars, may, perhaps, be but inadequate images of a life of St. Francis, omitting all notice of the doctrines he taught, and excluding any account of the influence of his theology on himself or his contemporaries, and on the generations which have succeeded him. This, however, is not a biography, but a rapid sketch put forth by secular men to secular readers. It would be indecorous to suppose that our profound divines, Scottish or English, would waste the midnight oil over so slight an attempt to revive the memory of a once famous Father of the Church, now fallen into unmerited neglect and indiscriminate opprobrium among us. Yet if, indeed, any student of Jewell or of Knox should so far descend from his Bodleian eminences as to cast a hasty glance over these lines, let him, if he will, first heartily censure, and then supply, their too palpable omissions. Let him write the complete story of St. Francis, and estimate impartially his acts, his opinions, his character, and his labours; and he will have written one important chapter of a History of the Monastic Orders, and will have contributed to supply one great deficiency in the ecclesiastical literature of the Protestant world.

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## THE FOUNDERS OF JESUITISM.

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ON the dawn of the day on which, in the year 1534, the Church of Rome celebrated the feast of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady, a little company of men emerged in solemn procession from the deep shadows cast by the towers of Notre Dame over the silent city below them. In a silence not less profound, except when broken by the chant of the matins appropriate to that sacred season, they climbed the Hill of Martyrs, and descended into the Crypt which then ascertained the spot where the Apostle of France had won the crown of martyrdom. With a stately though halting gait, as one accustomed to military command, marched at their head a man of swarthy complexion, bald-headed, and of middle stature, who had passed the meridian of life; his deep-set eyes glowing, as with a perennial fire, from beneath brows which, had phrenology then been born, she might have portrayed in her loftiest style, but which, even without her aid, announced to every observer a commission from on high to subjugate and to rule mankind. So majestic, indeed, was the aspect of Ignatius Loyola, that, during the sixteenth century, few, if any, of the books of his Order appeared without the impress of that imperial countenance. Beside him, in the chapel of St. Denys, knelt another worshipper; whose manly bearing, buoyant step, clear blue eye, and finely chiselled features, contrasted strangely with the solemnities in which he was engaged. Then, in early manhood, Francis Xavier united in his person the dignity befitting his birth as a grandee of Spain, and the grace which should adorn a page of the Queen of Castile and Arragon. Not less incongruous with the scene in which they bore their parts, were the slight forms of the boy Alphonso Salmeron, and of his bosom friend Iago Laynez, the destined successor of Ignatius in his spiritual dynasty. With them Nicholas Alphonso Bobadilla, and Simon Rodriguez — the first a teacher, the second a student, of philosophy — prostrated themselves before the altar, where ministered Peter Faber, once a shepherd in the mountains of Savoy, but now a priest in holy orders. By his hands was distributed to his associates the seeming



bread, over which he had uttered words of more than miraculous efficacy; and then were lifted up their united voices, uttering in low but distinct articulation, an oath, at the deep significance of which the nations might have trembled or rejoiced. Never did human lips pronounce a vow more religiously observed, or pregnant with results more momentous.

Ignatius Loyola was born in the year 1491, at Guipuscoa, in the province of Biscay. His mother, who had already borne to her husband ten children, resolved to bring forth this her youngest son in a stable, in memory of the birth-place of the Redeemer at Bethlehem. A few years later his father, a wealthy Hidalgo, introduced the boy as a page into the service of Ferdinand the Catholic, by whose command he was trained up in the graces of the court, the exercises of chivalry, the discipline of the camp, and the observances of religion. The traditions of his youth represent him as one in whom seeming contradictions met and were reconciled:—as, at the same time, a voluptuary revelling in sensual delights, and a knight of surpassing hardihood;—as a profligate in his habits, and yet edifying his companions by his modest speech and decorous manners;—as quickly roused to fierce anger, and as quickly subdued to gentleness and peace;—as at once destitute of learning, and an ardent cultivator of poetry;—as a captive in the chains of vice, while aspiring after the highest franchises of virtue;—as habitually distracted by conflicting aims, though living under the constant dominion of one master passion—the passion for controlling the wills and directing the conduct of other men.

At the siege of Pampeluna, by the forces of Francis the First, in the year 1521, Ignatius, in scorn of the alarm which had induced the garrison to capitulate, retired with a single follower into the citadel; and, while defending a breach in the walls, was struck down by a cannon ball, which broke and splintered one of his legs. His gallant enemies, raising him on their arms, bore him to the tent of their general, André de Foix; who, filled with admiration of his undaunted valour, placed him under the care of a French surgeon, and then sent him home to the adjacent castle of Loyola, with all the honours of war, and with the fracture apparently reduced. The operation had, however, been ill-performed, and the cure was imperfect; and, to repair the error, it was thought necessary that the bone should be broken anew. The fever which followed nearly brought to a premature grave the future restorer of the Papacy.

Thus far we have trodden on ground over which no prodigy hangs; but our path now lies through the land of miracles. While the patient slept, the Prince of the Apostles laid his venerable hand

on the limb, and at once the fever ceased, the pains passed away, and the fractured bones resumed their natural position. Yet the therapeutic skill of St. Peter was less perfect than might have been expected from so exalted a surgeon. A splinter still protruded through the skin, and the wounded leg was shortened, shrunk, and disfigured. To regain his fair proportions, Ignatius submitted to tortures from which a martyr might have shrunk. The fragment of his bone was violently wrenched away, and his limb placed in a rack which, during several days, was strained to draw back the nerves, sinews, and dislocated parts into their proper places. This frightful sacrifice at the shrine of Comeliness was, however, offered in vain. Her votary was long confined to his couch, oppressed by the sad conviction that, whether the lute should breathe a summons to the gaillard, or the trumpet ring out an alarm to the battle, the sound would henceforth be but as a mockery to him. Nor (if the tale be true) was he unhaunted by the still sorer misgiving that the bright eyes of his Angelica (for our Orlando was of course also *Innamorato*) might henceforward be turned with greater favour on some Medoro of unimpeachable symmetry of form, than on himself, halting at every step on a leg misshapen, mutilated, and contracted.

Books of knight-errantry soothed these anxieties, and relieved the lassitude of sickness; and, when these tales were exhausted, the disabled soldier betook himself to a series of still more marvellous romances. In the legends of the saints he discovered a new field of emulation and of glory. When contrasted with their self-conquests and their high rewards, the achievements and the renown of Roland and of Amadis waxed dim. When compared with those peerless damsels, for whose smiles Paladins had fought and died, the awful image of feminine loveliness and angelic purity which had irradiated the hermit's cell and the path of the way-worn pilgrim, presented itself to his mental vision in a glory transcendent and unapproachable. Far as the heavens are above the earth would rise the plighted fealty of the knight of the Virgin Mother over the noblest devotion of mere human chivalry. He would cast his shield over the Church which ascribed to her more than celestial dignities, and would bathe in the blood of her enemies the sword once desecrated to the mean ends of earthly ambition.

These ardent vows were not unheeded by her to whom they were addressed. Environed in light, and clasping her infant to her bosom, she revealed herself to the adoring gaze of her champion. At that heavenly vision, all fantasies of worldly and sensual delight, like exorcised demons, fled from his soul into an eternal exile. Arising from these erotic dreams, he suspended at her shrine his secular weapons, performed his nocturnal vigils, and,

with returning day, retired from the chapel, to consecrate his future life to the glory of the *Virgo Deipara*.

Restored to health the knight once more vaulted into his saddle, and, guiding his war-horse toward the altar of Our Lady of Montserrat, caricoled in advance of the throng of ignobler pilgrims, who, like himself, had made a solemn vow to worship there. A Moor from Granada encountered and accosted him; but from courteous greetings the two cavaliers soon passed to fierce and thorny controversy. If they had graduated at Salamanca, they could not have fallen upon a logomachy setting more triumphantly at defiance every imaginable attempt to resolve it. The infidel affirmed, and the Christian denied, that Mary had ceased to be a virgin when she became a mother; and the clashing of sword and scimitar seemed about to succeed to the war of words, when, at the point of intersection of several roads, the Mahometan (so runs the story) gave spurs to his horse and fled. The champion of the Madonna followed; but, throwing the rein on the neck of his steed, he left it to the animal's discretion either to follow or to decline the road which the fugitive had taken. To the observance of this law or custom of chivalry, the Paynim was indebted that day for an uncloven skull—an advantage which his most Catholic Sovereign did not probably allow him long to enjoy.

At Montserrat, Ignatius performed such acts of devotion as might best beseem so illustrious a sanctuary and so zealous a worshipper; and then betook himself to the adjacent town of Manreza, as a place admirably suited to the austerities with which he proposed to celebrate his self-dedication to Our Lady of the Serried Mount. Seven hours were daily given to prayer, during which he remained silent and motionless as a statue. His week-day diet was bread and water, to which on Sundays he added a condiment of herbs and ground ashes boiled together. Next to his skin he wore alternately an iron chain, a horse-hair cloth, and a sash of prickly briars. Three times each day he laid the scourge resolutely on his naked back. The bare earth was his bed. He became one of the fraternity of beggars who frequented the hospital of Manreza, exaggerated in his own person whatever was most revolting in their habits and appearance, revelled in filth, and rendered to the sick, and especially to such as were afflicted with ulcers, services of which it is impossible to read the account without a strong disposition to sickness.

It has long been known how fluently "the devil can quote Scripture for his purpose;" but to Ignatius belongs the discovery, that Satan can present his temptations to mankind in the form of excellent sense and sound reasoning. The Evil Spirit was, we are

told, afflicted by his excessive humility, and consequent happiness; and therefore assailed him with the following catechetical seduction: — “Is it not possible to be holy without being filthy? Is it essential to the purity of your soul that vermin should crawl over your person? Does it become a knight, of a lineage so noble as yours, to appear among men as a Lazar? Would not your virtues yield a brighter and more effective example in the court or in the camp, than in this mean hospital?”

To escape these diabolical suggestions, Ignatius quitted Manreza for a neighbouring cavern. It was in the centre of a wilderness, and could not be approached except by forcing the body through thorns and briars. At the extremity it was dark as the grave; though a fortunate crevice or loophole near the entrance enabled the hermit to gaze at the distant church of Our Lady of Montserrat. In this dismal cell, he delivered over his mind and body to pains which entirely eclipsed those of his hospital at Manreza. Five times each day he bruised and tore his flesh with a blunt iron scourge, beating his bosom at intervals with sharp flint stones, and, with diseased ingenuity, perverting every act of adoration into a penance and a torture. At one time he would commune with the Virgin Mother; at another he would wrestle with the Spirit of Evil; and so abrupt were his vicissitudes of rapture and despair, that in the storm of turbid passions his reason had nearly given way. Friendly hands dragged him from his hiding-place, and other hands, in intention at least, not less friendly, recorded his feverish ravings. At one time, he conversed with voices audible to no ear but his. At another, he sought to propitiate Him before whom he trembled, by expiations that would have been more fitly offered to Moloch. Spiritual doctors ministered to his relief, but they prescribed in vain. The simple truth was too simple for them. They could not perceive that in revealing Himself to mankind in the character of a Father, that awful Being has claimed, as peculiarly His own, the gentlest, the kindest, and the most confiding affections of our nature.

At the verge of madness Ignatius paused. That noble intellect was not to be whelmed beneath the tempests in which so many have sunk; but neither was he to be rescued by any vulgar methods. Standing on the steps of a Dominican church, he was reciting the office of Our Lady, when (as all his biographers assure us) Heaven itself was laid open to the eye of the worshipper. That ineffable mystery which the author of the Athanasian Creed has laboured to enunciate in words, was laid bare to him as an object, not of faith, but of actual sight. The past ages of the world were rolled back in his presence; and he beheld the material fabric of things rising into



being, and discerned the motives which had prompted this exercise of the creative energy. To his spiritualised sense was disclosed the mysterious process by which the Host is transubstantiated: and those other Christian verities, which it is permitted to common men to receive only as exercises of belief, now became known to him by immediate inspection and direct consciousness. During eight successive days his body reposed in an unbroken trance, while his spirit thus imbibed disclosures for which the tongues of men have no appropriate language. He attempted, indeed, to impart them in a volume of fourscore leaves; but, dark with excess of light, his words held the learned and the ignorant alike in speechless wonder.

Ignatius returned to this sublunary scene with a mission not unmeet for an envoy from the empyrean world of which he had thus become a temporary denizen. He returned to establish on earth a theocracy of which he should himself be the first administrator, and to which multitudes of every tribe and kindred of men should be the subjects. He returned, no longer a sordid half-distracted anchorite, but a kind of Swedenborg-Franklin; distinguished alike by designs of gigantic magnitude and of superhuman audacity; and by the clear good sense, the profound sagacity, the calm perseverance, and the flexible address with which he was to pursue them. He returned to show how the delirious enthusiasm of the cloister may be combined and reconciled, in the heroic nature, with the shrewdness of the exchange.

Neither in the hospital and cavern of Manreza, nor in his paroxysms of disease, nor in the ecstasies of his recovery, had the mind of Ignatius been really drifting without aim or anchorage. Among the saintly prodigies which had first amused his sick bed, and had then entranced the student of them, he had seized with peculiar fervour on the marvellous acts of Benedict, of Francis, and of Dominick; and the idea of founding a new monastic dynasty became at first a plaything of the imagination; then a settled desire of the heart; and then a vast project revolved in his understanding from day to day, until it had at length become a probable, a consistent, and a comprehensive whole. He once more took his place in human society in the garb and with the exterior aspect of other men; but labouring with a purpose which had already placed in his visionary grasp the sceptre with which, in yet distant years, he was destined to rule his spiritual family, and through them, to agitate the nations of the earth, from the Ganges to La Plata.

The first fruits of the labours of Ignatius in the execution of this stupendous design was the Book of Spiritual Exercises. It was originally written in Spanish; and, by the command of the Pope, Paul the Third, was rendered into two Latin versions—the first

severely literal, the other exhibiting the sense, not only with greater elegance, but with more substantial accuracy. Paul then published a bull, dated the 31st July, 1548, in which he commended the latter of those translations to the study of the faithful. A new version of the *Spiritual Exercises* from an original Spanish MS., corrected in the handwriting of Ignatius himself, was published at Rome, in 1834, by the Rev. Father John Roothaan, the present General of the Order of Jesus. On collating that MS. with the text of 1548, M. Roothaan discovered that the former translators had, in many passages, not only misrepresented, but impaired the sense of the great author; and his supposition is, that the humility of Ignatius had constrained him altogether to abandon his own literary composition to the disposal and to the mercy of others. Whatever may be the truth of this strange hypothesis, it is at least clear, that, till the year 1834, the world had never possessed a trustworthy edition of the single literary work of the great founder of Jesuitism.

The *Spiritual Exercises* form a manual of what may be termed "The Art of Conversion." It proposes a scheme of self-discipline by which, in the course of four weeks, passed in entire seclusion from the world, that mighty work is to be accomplished. In the first, the penitent is conducted through a series of dark retrospects to abase, and of gloomy prospects to alarm him. Those ends attained, he is, during the next seven days, to enrol himself in the army of the faithful, studying the biography of the Divine Captain of that elect host, and choosing with extreme circumspection that plan of life, religious or secular, in which he may best be able to tread in His steps, and to bear His standard, emblematical at once of suffering and of conquest. To sustain the soldier of the cross in this protracted warfare, his spiritual eye is to be directed, during the third of his solitary weeks, towards that unfathomable abyss of woe into which the Redeemer descended to rescue the race of Adam from the power of Satan and of death: and then seven suns are to rise and set while the disenthralled spirit is to chant triumphant hallelujahs, elevating her desires heavenwards, contemplating glories till then unimaginable, and mysteries never before revealed: when, at length, the spiritual exercises close by an absolute surrender of all the delights and interests of his sublunary state, as an holocaust, to be consumed by the undying flame of Divine love on the altar of the regenerate heart.

This book is at once a momentous chapter in the autobiography of Ignatius, and the earliest of his canons for the government of his future society. It discloses his own spiritual state during the penances and ecstasies of *Manreza*; and explains what is the con-

dition of mind into which he desired to bring his expected associates in the anticipated labours then lying in dim and shadowy prospect before him. The book would be full of interest, if regarded merely as the one extant devotional production of a man of such commanding genius. It is yet more so, when considered as the one insight we possess into the early religious character of him whom the Papacy honours as the greatest of her champions, and the Reformation dreads as the most formidable of her antagonists.

As if to disappoint the expectations raised both by the subject and the object of the book, it is neither pathetic, nor impassioned, nor profound, nor learned; but, from one end to the other, invariably dry and didactic, even when it delineates and enjoins the highest raptures of devotion. It lays down rules for the conduct of what Bunyan calls the "siege of Mansoul," in the precise and peremptory style in which Vauban might have prescribed the plan of an attack on Mentz or Courtray. A series of operations is given for each, in order, of the twenty-eight days of devotional retirement. Each day has its preparatory prayer, and each one *prelude*, or more,—a prelude being an effort of the imagination, by which the recluse is to call up before his mental sight the persons or the places with which his thoughts are about to be engaged; or, if he is preparing to meditate on things not sensuous (as, for example, his own sinfulness), he is to conceive of such things in parable. Thus, he may represent to himself his body as a prison, and his soul as a prisoner; or the world as a desolate valley thronged with wild beasts, among whom he is condemned to wander as an exile.

After offering the prayer, and portraying to himself the "prelude" of the day, the penitent is required to traverse a prescribed line of contemplation, in which a certain number of indispensable points are marked for his guidance. The diurnal course has usually seven such stations. Take as a specimen the second day of the first week. On that day the exercitant is first to make a general survey of his past sins; secondly, to ponder over the malignity of each class of offences; thirdly, to compare his own baseness with the sanctity of the superior orders of intelligences; fourthly, to contrast them with the moral attributes of Deity; fifthly, to consider (not without articulate exclamations) how his sins are aggravated by the providential bounties and the longsuffering of God; sixthly, to offer, in a divine colloquy, vows of amendment; seventhly, to repeat the Lord's Prayer.

In the same manner the neophyte has to perform, throughout the month, a daily series of penitential or eucharistic evolutions; not as his own heart, or as a higher influence may dictate, but at the word of command of his General. For even in the cavern of

Manreza, Ignatius was still internally gazing on the encampment and siege of Pampeluna. In the lowest depths of his contrition he could never forget that he was a soldier. Although he had finally quitted the service of Ferdinand for that of the Madonna, visions of mortal enemies, of well-disciplined followers, and of glorious victories, still continued to haunt his fancy, and to guide his pen. He crowded his pages with military images long after he had laid aside the carnal weapons of a merely secular warfare.

Thus, on the fourth day of the second week, the performer of the spiritual exercises is to direct his mind's eye towards two vast campaigns. One is near Jerusalem ; where, in a pleasant valley, the belligerent Redeemer, resplendent in form, and, in aspect, of surpassing loveliness, erects His standard as the chief commander of all the holy and the wise, and from that noble army sends forth detachments of apostles, disciples, and ministers to rescue the inhabitants of every land from ruin, and to improve and bless every condition of human life. The other plain is a battle-field in the province of Babylon ; where, seated on a fiery throne, surrounded by fœtid vapours, horrible in shape, and of terrific countenance, stands Lucifer, the generalissimo of a malignant host—invertebrate adversaries of Christ, and inexorable foes of the race of Adam, who, traversing the world at the bidding of their leader, propagate guilt, and lamentation, and woe in every abode of man, and pollute and sadden every soul which still retains any trace of her divine origin.

Throughout the book Ignatius prolongs this attempt to subjugate all the other faculties of the mind to the imagination. With that view the penitent is commanded to descend, like Dante, into the infernal regions, and there to look steadfastly on the mighty conflagration, and on the bodies of living fire in which the souls of the wicked are pent up. He is to listen to their howlings and blasphemies. He is to smell the smoke, the sulphur, and the putrescent odours, of the place of torment. He is to taste the bitter tears which are shed there ; and to handle the undying worm ; and to feel the scorching of the inextinguishable flame. At another time he is to visit the abode to which the Virgin Mother, when wounded in her own soul, retired from Calvary ; and is to examine the plan, the chambers, the cells, and the oratory of her humble dwelling. This ideal vision is to rise higher still. The Deity himself is to be seen as actually present in all the elements—in the vegetation of plants—in the sensation of animals—in the intelligence of man. He is to be actually beheld in every creative and conservative energy, and in every sanctifying influence ; until the divine omnipresence shall become, not a mere truth



abiding in the reason, but an object of direct, though spiritual perception.

Closely interwoven with these revelations of what is to pass in the hidden chambers of imagery, are precepts of plain sound sense, like so many solid rocks breaking through the dazzling unrealities of the *Fata Morgana*. Thus Ignatius teaches, that he who would wisely choose his plan of life, must determine with himself what are the great ends of his existence ; so that to those ends all means may be subordinate, instead of rendering the ultimate design subordinate to what is merely instrumental. He directs us to suppose ourselves, not the persons by whom the choice of a calling is to be made, but the advisers of some very dear friend, whose circumstances exactly resemble our own ; and he bids us to follow the advice which we should give to that imaginary friend. We are taught to suppose the hour of death actually arrived, and are to choose our calling, as though in the actual presence of that awful antagonist of all self-indulgent sophistry. And to those who are meditating matrimony are prescribed a series of judicious reflections respecting the kind of household and establishment they ought to maintain ; respecting the right methods of governing them ; respecting the means of rendering their conversation and example instructive to their families ; and respecting the appropriation of their income between the several classes of expenditure, personal, domestic, and eleemosynary.

He must have been deeply read in the nature of man, who should have predicted such first fruits as these from the restored health of the distracted visionary, who, in the hospital and cavern of Manreza, and in the long delirium which followed, had alternately sounded the basest strings of humility on earth, and the living chords which vibrate with spontaneous harmonies along the seventh heavens. His plan of transmuting profligates into converts by a mental process, of which, during any one of her evolutions round our planet, the moon is to witness the commencement and the close, may possibly pass for a plagiarism from the academies of Laputa. But Ignatius Loyola had his eyes open, and his attention awake, even when most absorbed in dreams. By force of an instinct with which such minds as his alone are gifted, he could rival the shrewd, the practical, and the worldly wise, even when abandoning himself to the current of emotions which they are alike unable to comprehend or to endure. His mind resembled the body of his great disciple, Francis Xavier ; which, as he preached or baptized, rose majestically towards the skies, while his feet (the pious curiosity of his hearers ascertained the fact) retained their firm hold on the earth below. The object of the

Spiritual Exercises was at once to excite and to control religious sensibilities. While aiming to exalt the soul above terrestrial objects, he was intent on disenchanting his followers of the self-deceits which usually wait on that exaltation. Though most remote from the tone of feeling which animates the gay and busy scenes of life, the book everywhere attests the keen scrutiny with which he had observed those scenes, and the profound discernment with which he had studied the actors in them. To his Protestant readers the *Evangelical* spirit of the writer must have been the occasion of great, and perhaps unwelcome surprise. It would, indeed, be easy to extract from his pages many propositions which the Synod of Westminster would have anathematised; but that grave assembly might have drawn from them much to confirm the chief article of their own confessions and catechisms. If he yielded an idolatrous homage to some of the demigods of Rome, his supreme adoration was strictly reserved for Him to whom alone adoration is due. If he ascribed to ritual expiations a false and imaginary value, all his mighty powers were bowed down in a submissive affiance in the Divine nature, as revealed to us under the veil of human infirmity, and of more than human suffering. Philip Doddridge, one of those who have breathed most freely on earth the atmosphere of heaven, produced, at the distance of two centuries, a work which the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola might have suggested, and of many parts of which it might have afforded the model; so many are still the points of contact between those who, ranging themselves round the great common centre of the faith of Christians, occupy the most opposite positions in that expanded circle.

The nine years of the life of Ignatius which immediately followed the production of his book were worn away in pilgrimages, in feats of asceticism, in the working (as it was believed) of miracles, and in escapes, all but miraculous, from the dangers which his devout and martial spirit induced him to encounter. It is a steep path by which the heroes of the Church have scaled the sublime heights of "*Perfection*;" and his vows constrained him thus to pursue it. But the same vows obliged him to conduct his fellow-pilgrims from the City of Destruction to the Land of Beulah. In prison and in shipwreck, fainting with hunger or wasted with disease, his inflexible spirit brooded over that bright, though as yet shapeless vision; until at length it assumed a coherent form as he knelt on the Mount of Olives, and traced there the last and the indelible foot-print of the ascending Redeemer of mankind. At that hallowed spot had ended the weary way of Him who had bowed the heavens, and come down to execute on earth a mission

of unutterable love, and of thought-surpassing self-denial. There also was revealed to the prophetic eye of the founder of the Order of Jesus (no Seer like genius kindled by high resolves!) the long line of missionaries who, animated by his example, and guided by his instructions, should proclaim that holy name from the rising to the setting sun. It was indeed a futurity perceptible only to the telescopic eye of faith. At the mature age of thirty, possessing no language but his own, no science but that of the camp, and no literature beyond the biographies of Saints and Paladins, he became the self-destined teacher of the future teachers of the world. Hoping against hope, he returned to Barcelona; and there, as the class-fellow of little children, commenced the study of the first rudiments of the Latin tongue.

Among the established facetiæ of the stage, is the distraction of some dramatic Eloisa attempting to conjugate the verb *Amo*, under the guidance of her too attractive Abelard. Few playwrights probably have been aware that the jest had its type, if not its origin, in the scholastic experience of Ignatius Loyola. His advance in the grammar was arrested by a malignant spirit at the same critical point, and in much the same manner. Assuming the garb of an angel of light, the demon succeeded in driving from his memory the inflections of the verb, by suggesting at each some corresponding elevation of his soul heavenwards. To baffle his insidious enemy, the harassed scholar implored the pedagogue to make a liberal use of that discipline, the pain or the efficacy of which, who that has endured it can ever forget? The exorcism was complete. *Amo* became familiar to his recollection in all her affectionate moods, and in all her changeful tenses. Then began Thomas à Kempis to speak to him intelligibly; and then Erasmus disclosed to him treasures of wisdom and of wit formerly buried in the impenetrable recesses of an unknown tongue. Energy won her accustomed triumphs; and in the year 1528 he entered the University of Paris as a student of the Humanities, and of what was then called Philosophy.

The fourth of the ten decades of human life (those ten golden years in which other men achieve, or most strenuously labour for distinction), was devoted by Ignatius to the studies preparatory to his great undertaking. At one time he listened to the prælections of grave professors; at another he traversed England and the Netherlands as a beggar, soliciting the means of subsistence. But, whether he sat at the feet of the learned, or sued for the alms of the rich, he was still maturing more lofty designs than the most ambitious monarch of the house of Valois, or of Plantagenet, had ever dared to cherish. At Paris he at length found the means of

carrying into effect the cherished purposes of so many years. It was the heroic age of Spain; and there was no field of adventure, secular or spiritual, into which the countrymen of Gonsalvo and of Cortes feared to follow any adventurous leader.

We have partly seen how Ignatius proposed to convert men into Jesuits by a course of solitary devotional exercises; and we are not wholly unable to explain the method by which he rendered his own personal intercourse with them conducive to the same end. On the contemplative and the timid, he imposed severe exercises of active virtue. To the gay and ardent, he appealed in a spirit still more buoyant than their own. He presented himself neck deep in a pool of frozen water, to teach an otherwise obdurate debauchee how to subdue the appetites of the flesh. To a hard-hearted priest he made a general confession of his own sins, with such agonies of remorse and shame, as to break up, by force of sympathy, the fountains of penitence in the bosom of the confessor. He engaged at billiards with a joyous lover of the game, on condition that whichever of the two might be defeated should serve his antagonist during the following month in whatever manner the conqueror should prescribe; and the victorious saint consigned his adversary to the performance of the four weeks of the Spiritual Exercises. He encouraged and shared the wildest ascetic extravagances of his disciples. His countenance was as haggard, his self-flagellations as cruel, and his couch and diet as sordid as the rest. When he saw them faint with the extremity of their sufferings, he would assume the prophetic character, and promote, by predicting, their recovery. Rodriguez, one of the gentlest and most patient of them, fled for relief to a solitary hermitage; but found his retreat obstructed by a man whom he described as of terrible aspect and gigantic stature, armed with a naked sword, and breathing menaces. Hosez, another of his followers, happening to die at the moment when Ignatius, prostrate before the altar, was reciting from the Confiteor the words "*Et omnibus sanctis*," that countless host was (as the Saint assured the survivors) revealed to his eye, and, among them, resplendent in glory, appeared his deceased friend, to sustain and animate the hopes of his still militant brethren.

Thus making himself all things to all men, he constrained his companions in study to become first his pupils, and then his associates in religion. Many of them, indeed, yielded at once, and without a struggle, to the united influence of his sanctity and his genius; and, from these more docile converts, he selected no less than eight of the ten original members of his infant order. After performing the initiatory spiritual exercises, they all swore, on the consecrated Host in the crypt of St. Denys, to accompany their



spiritual father on a mission to Palestine; or, if that should be impracticable, to submit themselves to the Vicar of Christ to be disposed of at his pleasure.

Impetuous as had been the temper of Ignatius in early life, he had now learnt to be patient of the tardy growth of great designs. Leaving his disciples to complete their studies at Paris, under the care of Peter Faber, he returned to Spain to recruit their number, to mature his plans, and perhaps to escape from a too familiar intercourse with his future subjects. In the winter of 1536, they commenced their pilgrimage to the Eternal City. At Venice they were joined by Ignatius. They who would conquer crowns, whether secular or spiritual, must needs tread in slippery places. As he journeyed to Rome, accompanied by Laynez, but in advance of the rest, he saw a vision, the account of which, derived from his own lips, it is painful to transcribe. It exhibited that Being whom no eye hath seen, and whom no tongue may lightly name; and with Him the Eternal Son, bearing a heavy cross, and uttering the welcome assurance, "I will be propitious to you at Rome."

There can be no doubt that Ignatius made this statement, and that he made it with a conviction of its truth. But they must be in servitude to a party, and to a name, who can ascribe a due reverence for what is most high and most holy, to the mind which could admit such a conviction, and to the tongue which could give it utterance.

Notwithstanding this supposed divine promise, Ignatius found it no easy task to obtain the requisite papal sanction for the establishment of his order. In that age the regular or monastic clergy had to contend with an almost universal unpopularity. With the bishops and secular priests they had long been waging a bitter warfare. They had now to encounter the additional hostility of the wits, the Reformers, and the Vatican itself. A large share of the disasters under which the Church of Rome was suffering was not unreasonably attributed to their laxity of manners and dissoluteness of life. To oppose his formidable antagonists in every part of Europe, the Pope had given his confidence and encouragement to the Theatins, and other isolated preachers, who were labouring at once to protect and to purify the fold, by diffusing among them their own deep and genuine spirit of devotion. At such a moment it seemed an equivocal or dangerous policy to call another religious order into existence. Both the new and zealous allies, and the ancient supporters, of the Papacy, might be expected to regard such an institution with extreme jealousy and disfavour. Neither did the morbid foresight of the Vatican fail to perceive, that the chief of

a society projected on a plan of such stupendous magnitude, might become a dangerous rival even to the successors of St. Peter.

Ignatius, therefore, consumed three years in unprofitable suits for a bull of incorporation. He endeavoured, by lavish promises, to propitiate not mere mortal man only, but the Deity himself. He engaged to offer three thousand masses, if so his prayer might be granted. Earth and heaven seemed equally deaf to his offers, when at length terror extracted from Paul the Third the concession which no entreaty and no prayers had been able to extort.

The Reformation had crossed the Alps, and made an alarming progress in the very bosom of Italy. Ferrara seemed about to fall away from the Church of Rome, as Germany, England, and Switzerland had fallen. The death-struggle between the contending powers could no longer be averted or postponed. The Consistory then became enlightened to see the Divine hand in a scheme which they had, till then, regarded as the suspicious device of an ambitious and formidable man. They could no longer refuse the gratuitous and devoted services of a host, called, as it might seem, into existence, for the express purpose of defeating their hitherto invincible enemies — a host animated by an enthusiasm as ardent as that of the Reformers themselves, informed by a learning not less profound than theirs, and guided by that singleness of will and fixedness of purpose in which Luther and his associates were so eminently defective.

On the 27th of September, 1540, Paul the Third, therefore, affixed the papal seal to the bull of “Regimini,” the Magna Charter of the Order of Jesus. Admirable as was the foresight which dictated this grant, it was made with undisguised reluctance, with painful misgivings, and with an anxiety of which the instrument itself affords the clearest evidence. It places in the lips of the new society the following emphatical profession of their future subjection to the power from which they were to derive their corporate existence : —

“*Quamvis Evangelio doceamur, et fide orthodoxâ cognoscamus, ac firmiter profiteamur, omnes Christi fideles Romano Pontifici tanquam capiti, ac Jesu Christi vicario, subesse; ad majorem tamen nostræ societatis humilitatem, ac perfectam uniuscujusque mortificationem, et voluntatumstrarum abnegationem, summopere conducere judicavimus, singulos nos, ultra illud commune vinculum, speciali voto abstringi, ita ut quicquid Romani Pontifices pro tempore existentes jusserint, quantum in nobis fuerit exequi teneamur.*”

So wrote the Pope in the person of his new Prætorians. The first care of Ignatius was the election of a General of that

formidable band. For that purpose he summoned the chief members of his company to Rome. They all concurred in choosing himself. He declined the proffered honour, and was a second time unanimously elected. Again he refused to govern, unless his confessor, to whom, as he said, all his bad dispositions were known, should command him, in the name of Christ, to submit to the hard necessity. The confessor accordingly pronounced that solemn injunction, and then Ignatius Loyola ascended the throne of which he had been so long laying the foundations. It will be credible that he seriously contemplated the renunciation of that high reward, when it shall be ascertained that Julius became Dictator, Cromwell Protector, and Napoleon First Consul, in their own despire; but not till then.

When finally invested with sovereignty, Ignatius wielded the sceptre as best becomes an absolute monarch, magnanimously and with unfaltering decision; revered, but exciting no servile fear; beloved, but permitting no rude familiarity; declining no enterprise which high daring might accomplish, attempting none which headlong ambition might suggest; self-multiplied in the ministers of his will; yielding to them a large and generous confidence; trusting no man whom he had not deeply studied; assigning to none a province beyond the range of his capacity.

Though not in books, yet in the school of active, and especially of military life, Ignatius had learnt the great secret of government, at least of his government. That secret is, that the social affections, when concentrated within a well-defined circle, possess an intensity and an endurance unrivalled by those passions of which self is the immediate object. He had the sagacity to perceive that emotions like those with which a Spartan or a Jew had yearned over the land and the institutions of their fathers — emotions stronger than appetite, vanity, ambition, avarice, or death itself — might be kindled in the members of his order, if he could grasp those mainsprings of human action of which the Greek and the Hebrew legislators had obtained the mastery. Nor did he make the attempt in vain.

He legislated at once in the spirit of his early and of his late profession — as a soldier and as a spiritual champion of the Church of Rome. Obedience, prompt, absolute, blind, and unhesitating — the cardinal virtue of both — was the basis of his religious institute. Such submission, however arduous in appearance, is in reality the least irksome of all self-sacrifices. The mysterious gift of free will is the heaviest burthen of the vast multitude of mankind. The free subjects, and the heavenly appointed ministers, of the Jewish theocracy, took refuge from that service in the des-

potism of a man whose sole praise it was to be taller by the head and shoulders than any of them." In the same spirit men every where desire to walk by sight, not by faith — to obey the stern command of a superior, if so they may be absolved from listening for the still small voice of conscience — to bear the yoke of spiritual bondage, if so they may escape the fatigue of study, the labour of meditation, the pains of doubt, and the anxieties of mental freedom. Ignatius had well observed this propensity of the human heart, and he framed the Jesuit code with a constant reference to it.

He ordained that his order should be an elective absolute monarchy for life. The Sovereign, or General, was to be chosen by a small senate or aristocracy. He was, of course, to possess every divine grace, and every human virtue. But he was also to possess middle age, good health, good looks; and, if to these gifts could be added former rank and consideration in the world, so much the better.

Christendom was to be divided into provinces, over each of which a president or provincial was to rule. To control the powers of the monarch, each of the five chief provincials was to have at Rome a representative, called an assistant; and the five assistants were to form a council, who should at once advise the general and watch over his conduct. The general, and each of his provincials, was to have attached to him a functionary called a monitor; whose office may be best described as being that of an external conscience.

Such securities as these were, however, totally inadequate to restrain the high prerogatives of Ignatius and his successors. They were to inspect the secrets of the soul of each member of the society, which, for that purpose, were to be disclosed to the general by the provincial in letters written as frequently as once a week. All employments and dignities of which any Jesuit was capable, were reserved for the patronage of the general, and of him alone. He was to assign to each member his duty and his station. The whole property of the order was to be at his absolute disposal. He might alter the law, or, in particular cases, dispense with the observance of it.

To the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, common to all the monastic orders, the professed Jesuit was to add an oath to proceed instantly to any part of the world to which the Pope might send him for the advancement of religion; and every Jesuit was to bind himself to reject all secular or ecclesiastical dignities, except such as the society itself might have to bestow. But it was provided that if the Pope should constrain any member to accept a bishopric, he would, in that capacity, give heed to the advice of his general.

None might be admitted into the society without some remark-



able endowments of intellect and piety, nor without good health, an agreeable person, and attractive manners. The novice was to renounce to the society all his worldly possessions. He must be exempt from all fetters of betrothment, or of any other contract which might bring him within the reach of the civil tribunals.

The process of what may be called "breaking in" a young Jesuit, was prescribed with great minuteness and severity. The objects of this discipline were to subdue all habits of indolence, to extinguish every sentiment of aristocratic rank, to eradicate the pride of personal independence, to infuse into the soul a spirit of instant, unscrupulous, unhesitating obedience, and to fasten on it the conviction that from the lips of the Superior were to be gathered the very oracles of God. To accomplish these ends, the appointed system of education was to be pursued with an intensity of purpose never to be relaxed. The Superior was never to shrink from the infliction of any necessary or wholesome pain. The Pupil was never to decline to apply himself to any useful arts, however mean, humiliating, or offensive.

In the science of social Dynamics it is written, that he is the king of men, *jure divino*, who, with the sublimest purposes and the most inflexible will, exacts the most absolute submission and the most painful sacrifices. To him are drawn the feeble-minded by the instinct of obedience, the audacious by the force of sympathy, the torpid by the craving for stimulants, the sceptical by the thirst for certainties, and the unoccupied by the desire to employ their ineffectual energies. By this title reigned Lycurgus and Mahomet over nations, Zeno in the schools, Benedict in the cloister, Columbus in exploration, Cortes in the camp, and Ignatius Loyola over the host which, at his summons, gathered round him to extend the dominion of the Church of Rome over the heretical and the heathen nations of the earth.

It was with a sublime audacity that he demanded their obedience. It was to be rendered, not merely in the outward act, but by the understanding and the will. He spoke to them, not with the timidity of a fallible teacher, but as one invested with the delegated prerogatives of the divine Redeemer himself. "*Non intueamini in personâ superioris, hominem obnoxium erroribus atque miseriis, sed Christum ipsum.*" "*Superioris vocem ac jussa non secus ac Christi vocem accipite.*" "*Ut statuatis vobiscum quicquid superior præcipit ipsius Dei præceptum esse ac voluntatem.*"

He who wrote thus had not lightly observed how the spirit of man exults in bondage, if permitted to believe that the chain has been spontaneously assumed.

Neither had he inattentively examined the motives which will

sometimes stimulate the most submissive to revolt. He granted to his followers the utmost liberty in outward things, which could be reconciled with their spiritual servitude. The enslaved soul was not to be rudely reminded of her slavery. There was to be no peculiar dress, — no routine of prayers and canticles, — no prescribed system of austerities, — no monastic seclusions.

Ignatius knew well how awful is the might of folly in all sublunary affairs. Therefore no frivolous, fickle, or feeble-minded proselyte was to find a place in his brotherhood.

He must be served by virgin minds, who could be ruled by prejudices of his own engrafting. Therefore no one could be admitted who had worn, though but for a single day, the habit of any other religious order.

Stern initiatory discipline must probe the spirits of the professed; for both scandal and danger would attend the faintness of any leader in the host. Gentler probations must suffice for co-adjutors, whether lay or spiritual; for no host is complete without a body of irregular partisans.

The general himself—the centre and animating spirit of the whole company—he must rule for life, because ambition and cabal will fill up the intervals between frequent elections, and because the reverence due to royalty is impaired by the aspect of dethroned sovereigns. He must be absolute, because human authority can on no other terms exhibit itself as the image of the Divine. He must reign at a distance, and in solitude, because no government is effective in which imagination has not her proper work to do. He must be the ultimate depository of the secrets of the conscience of each of his subjects, because power can be irresistible only when guided by unlimited knowledge. No subject of his might accept any dignity, ecclesiastical or civil, beyond the precincts of the order, because the general himself must be supreme in rank as in dominion, and must alone possess the means of gratifying the ambition, and attracting to himself the homage, of his dependents.

And the ultimate object of this scheme of government,—it must be vast enough to expand the soul of the proselyte to a full sense of her own dignity; and practical enough to provide incessant occupation for his time and thoughts; and difficult enough to bring all his powers into strenuous activity; and dangerous enough to teach the lessons of mutual dependence. There must also be conflicts for the brave, and intrigues for the subtle, and solitary labours for the studious, and offices of mercy for the compassionate. To all and to each must be offered both a temporal and an eternal recompence,—in this life, the reward

of a communion and a sympathy intense in proportion to the narrowness of its range, and stimulating in proportion to the mysterious secrecy in which it was to be exercised; in the life to come, felicities of which the anxious heart was not permitted to doubt: for the promises of the wise, the fellowship of the holy, and the assurances of men whose claims to the Divine favour it would seem to them impious to question, formed the present earnest of that celestial inheritance.

If there be in any of our universities a professor of moral philosophy initiating his pupils into the science of human nature, let him study the constitutions of Ignatius Loyola. They were the fruit of the solitary meditation of many years. His midnight lamp threw its rays on nothing but his crucifix, his manuscript, his Thomas à Kempis de Imitatione, and the New Testament. Any other presence would have been a profane intrusion; for the work (so, at least, he believed and taught) was but a transcript of thoughts imparted to his disembodied spirit, when in early manhood it had been caught up into the seventh heavens. As he wrote, a lambent flame, in shape like a tongue of fire, is said to have hovered about his head; and, as may be read in his own hand in a still extant paper, the hours of composition were passed in tears of devotion, in holy ardour, in raptures, and amidst celestial apparitions.

Ignatius was not less admirable as an administrator, than as a giver, of laws. Taking his own immutable station at the seat and centre of spiritual empire, he committed to each of his pro-consuls his province, to each of his ministers his function, and to the humblest of his agents his task, according to the natural or acquired aptitude of each for the work assigned him. He was intimately acquainted with the effects on human character of self-knowledge — of strenuous activity — and of protracted suffering. He therefore required his disciples to scrutinise the recesses of their own hearts until they turned for relief from the wonders and the shame within to the mysteries and the glories of the world of spirits. He exercised them by ceaseless employment, until the transmutation of means into ends was complete, and efforts, at first the most irksome, had become spontaneous and even grateful to them. He disciplined them by every form of privation and self-inflicted pain, until fortitude, ripening into habit, became the source of delights which, however incomprehensible to the self-indulgent, are far more real and enduring than their own. He rendered them stoics, mystics, and enthusiasts; and then employed them in duties emphatically practical, to the purpose, and to the time.

Ignatius was not merely a legislator and a statesman, but to the last breath he drew, a soldier also. He was a general, whose authority none might question, — a comrade on whose cordiality all might rely, — a leader, who partook in every danger and hardship of his followers, — a strategist of consummate skill and of all-embracing survey. In his religious campaigns his policy was always aggressive. However inadequate might be the force at his command for defensive operations, he never hesitated to weaken it by detachments on a distant service, if he could so strike terror into nearer foes, and animate the courage of irresolute allies. In this spirit he encountered Lutheranism in Europe by addressing himself to the conversion to the faith of Rome of the barbarous or half-civilised nations of the earth. His searching eye long scanned the characters of his lieutenants to discover which of them was best qualified for that difficult and hazardous office. Even to him it was not easy to discover such men. They must not be only superior to all the allurements of appetite and the common infirmities of our nature, but superior also to those temptations which beset inquisitive minds, and men of the highest order of ability. His missionaries must be prepared to do and dare, but not much disposed to speculate. They must burn with an inextinguishable zeal, but must be insensible to the impulse for converting a subordinate into an independent command. He long weighed this perplexing choice, and decided it at length with the utmost sagacity and success. It fell on many who well fulfilled these conditions, but on none in whom all the requisites combined so marvellously as in the young Spanish noble who had borne himself so gallantly in the crypt of St. Denys, and had conducted the pilgrimage to Rome of the first little company of the proselytes of Ignatius.

It was in the year 1505, that Francis Xavier, the youngest child of a numerous family, was born in the castle of his ancestors, in the Pyrenees. Robust and active, of a gay humour and ardent spirit, the young mountaineer listened with a throbbing heart to the military legends of his house, and to the hopes which spoke of days to come when his illustrious lineage should derive new splendour from his own achievements. But the hearts of his parents yearned over the son of their old age, and the enthusiasm which would have borne him to the pursuit of glory in the camp, was directed by their counsels to the less hazardous contest for literary eminence at the University of Paris. From the embrace of Aristotle and his commentators, he would, however, have been prematurely withdrawn by the failure of his resources (for the lords of Xavier were not wealthy), if a domestic prophetess (his



elder sister) had not been inspired to foretell his marvellous career and immortal recompence. His family acknowledged that all pecuniary sacrifices would be wisely made for a child destined to have altars raised to his name throughout the Catholic Church, and masses chanted to his honour till time should be no longer. He was thus enabled to struggle on at the College of St. Barbara, until he had become qualified to earn his own maintenance as a public teacher of philosophy.

The chair of Xavier was crowded by the studious, and his society courted by the gay, the noble, and the rich. It was courted also by one who stood aloof from the admiring multitude, — among them, but not of them. Sordid in dress, but of lofty bearing; unimpassioned, though intensely earnest; abstemious in speech, yet uttering occasionally, in deep and most melodious tones, words of strange significance, Ignatius Loyola was gradually working over the mind of his young companion a spell which no difference of taste, of habits, or of age, was of power to repel. Potent as it was, the charm was long resisted. Hilarity was the native element of Francis Xavier, and his grave monitor afforded him an inexhaustible theme of mirth and raillery. Armed with satire, which was not always playful, the light heart of youth contended as best it might against the solemn impressions which he could neither welcome nor avoid. Whether Xavier plunged into the amusements in which he delighted, or engaged in the disquisitions in which he excelled, or traced the windings of the Seine through the forest which then lined its banks, Ignatius was still at hand, ready to discuss with him the charms of society, of learning, or of nature; but whatever had been the subject of their discourse, it was still closed by the same awful inquiry, "What shall it profit the man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The world which Xavier had sought to gain was already exhibiting to him its accustomed treachery. It had given him entertainment and applause, but it had stolen from him first his self-control, and then his pupils and emoluments. Ignatius was still at hand to repair his losses. He became the eulogist of the genius and the eloquence of his friend. He presented to him the scholars attracted to his chair by these panegyrics. He repeated them in the hearing of the delighted teacher, but then, when the kindling eye of Xavier attested the sense of conscious merit and of well-established renown, he would check the rising exultation by the ever-recurring inquiry, — "What shall it profit?"

Improvidence squandered these new resources, but nothing

could damp the zeal of Ignatius. There he was again, himself the poorest of the poor, yet ministering to the wants of Xavier from a purse filled by the alms he had solicited; but there again was also the same unvarying demand urged in the same rich though solemn cadence, — “What shall it profit?”

In the unrelaxing grasp of the strong man, at once forgiven and assisted, beloved and rebuked by his stern associate, Xavier gradually yielded to the fascination. He became, like his monitor, impassive, at least in appearance, to all sublunary pains and pleasures, performed the initiatory rite of the Spiritual Exercises, and joined with his brethren in the vows of Montmartre, surpassed them all in the fervour of his devotion and the austerity of his self-discipline, and, in the winter of 1536, became the leader of their march to the Eternal City.

Accomplished in all courtly exercises, he prepared for his journey by binding tight cords round his arms and legs, in holy revenge for the pleasure which their graceful agility had once afforded him, and so pursued his way with Spartan constancy, till the corroded flesh closed obstinately over the ligatures. Miracle, the ever prompt handmaid of the energetic children of the Church of Rome, burst the bands which no surgeon could unloose, and her friendly presence was then attested by the toils which his unfettered limbs immediately endured in the menial service of his fellow-travellers.

At Venice they rejoined Ignatius, and there employed themselves in ministering to the patients in the hospitals. Foremost in every act of intrepid self-mortification, Xavier signalised his zeal by exploits, the mere mention of which the stomachs of our feeblar generation could not endure. While thus courting all the physical tortures of purgatory, his soul inhaled the anticipated delights of Paradise. These penances and raptures brought him twice to the gates of death; and then, in what he supposed to be his last extremity, he caused himself to be borne to places of public resort, that his ghastly aspect might teach the awful lessons which his tongue was no longer able to pronounce.

Such prodigies, whether enacted by the saints of Rome, or by the saints of Benares, exhibit a sovereignty of the spiritual over the animal nature, which can hardly be contemplated without some feelings akin to reverence. But, on the whole, the hooked Faqueer, spinning round his gibbet, is the more respectable suicide of the two. His homage is at least meet for the deity he worships. But that gracious Being, whose name had been assumed by Xavier and his associates, was equally victorious over the stoical illusions and the lower desires of our nature. When He made himself of no

reputation, and took on Him the form of a servant, He yet sought repose amongst the domestic charities of life, and condescended to accept those blameless solaces which life has to offer to the weary and heavy laden. No services were ever offered to Him less in harmony with His serene self-reverence, than the vehement emotions, the squalid filth, and the lacerated frames of the first members of the Society of Jesus.

Whatever might have been the reward of Xavier's self-mortifications in another life, his name would probably have left no trace in this world's records, had it not happened that John III. of Portugal, resolving to plant the Christian faith in the Indian territories which had become subject to the dominion or influence of his crown, petitioned the Pope to select some fit leader of this peaceful crusade. The choice first fell on Bobadilla, who, however, was immediately seized with a fever of such violence as disqualified him for the enterprise. Then it was, as we are told, that Ignatius was enlightened from on high to perceive in Xavier the vessel of election. The Holy Father ratified the choice.

A happier selection could not have been made; and never was a summons to toil, to suffering, and to death, so joyously received. In the visions of the night, he had often groaned beneath the incumbent weight of a wild Indian, of ebony hue and gigantic stature seated on his shoulders. In those dreams he had often traversed tempestuous seas, enduring shipwreck, famine, and persecution, in their most ghastly forms; and, as each peril was encountered, his panting soul had invoked yet more abundant opportunities of making such glorious sacrifices for the conversion of mankind. And now, when the clearer sense and the approaching accomplishment of these dark intimations were disclosed to him, passionate sobs attested the rapture which his tongue was unable to speak. He fell on his knees before Ignatius, kissed the feet of the holy father, repaired his tattered cassock, and, with no other provision than his breviary, left Rome on the 15th of March, 1540, for Lisbon, his destined port of embarkation for the East.

Light of heart, and joyful in discourse, he travelled from Rome across the Alps and Pyrenees. As he descended the southern slopes of his native mountains, there rose to his sight the venerable towers, beneath which he had enjoyed the sports of childhood, and woven the day-dreams of youth; where still lived the mother, who, during his first eighteen years, had day by day watched over him, and blessed him, and the saintly sister, whose inspired voice had foretold his present high vocation. But it was all too high for even a momentary intrusion of the holiest of those feelings which are merely human. He was on his way with tidings of mercy to a

perishing world, and had not one hour to waste, nor one parting tear to bestow, on those whom he best loved and most revered, and whom, in this life, he could never hope to meet again. We are not left to conjecture in what light his conduct was regarded. Martin D'Aypilcueta, surnamed the Doctor of Navarre, a grave and well-beneficed divine (a shrewd, thriving, hospitable, much respected man, no unlikely candidate for the mitre, and a candidate, too, in his own drowsy way, for amaranthine crowns, and celestial blessedness), was the maternal uncle of Xavier, and very plausibly believed his nephew mad. He favoured his enthusiastic kinsman with much judicious remonstrance against his suicidal project. Half sportive, half indignant, was Xavier's answer:—"I care little, most illustrious Doctor, for the judgment of men, and least of all for their judgment, who decide before they hear and before they understand." Mad or sober, he was at least impelled by a force, at the first shock of which the united judiciousness and respectability of mankind must needs fall to pieces,—the force of will, concentrated on one great end, and elevated above the misty regions of doubt to that unclouded atmosphere, where Faith, attended by her Sister Graces, Hope and Courage, Joy and Fortitude, converts the future into the present, and casts the brightest hues over objects the most repulsive to sense, and the most painful to our feeble nature.

As the vessel in which Xavier embarked for India fell down the Tagus, and shook out her reefs to the wind, many an eye was dim with unwonted tears, for she bore a regiment of a thousand men to reinforce the garrison of Goa; nor could the bravest of that gallant host gaze on the receding land without foreboding that he might never see again those dark chestnut forests and rich orange groves, with the peaceful convents and the long-loved homes reposing in their bosom. The countenance of Xavier alone beamed with delight. He knew that he should never tread his native mountains more; but he felt that he was not an exile. He was to depend for food and raiment on the bounty of his fellow-passengers; but no thought for the morrow troubled him. He was going to convert nations of which he knew neither the language nor even the names; but his soul was oppressed with no misgivings. Worn by incessant sickness, with the refuse food of the lowest seamen for his diet, and the cordage of the ship for his couch, he rendered to the diseased services too revolting to be described, and lived among the dying and the profligate, the unwearied minister of consolation and of peace. In the midst of that floating throng he knew both how to create for himself a sacred solitude, and how to mix in all their pursuits in the free spirit of a man of the world,



a gentleman, and a scholar. With the viceroy and his officers, he talked as pleased them best, of war or trade, of politics or navigation. To restrain the common soldiers from gambling, he invented for their amusement less dangerous pastimes, or even held the stakes for which they played, that, by his presence and his gay discourse, he might at least check the excesses which he could not entirely prevent.

Five weary months (weary to all but him) brought the ship to Mozambique, where an endemic fever threatened a premature grave to the apostle of the Indies. But his was not a spirit to be quenched or allayed by the fiercest paroxysms of disease. At each remission of his malady he crawled to the beds of his fellow-sufferers to soothe their terrors, or assuage their pains. Just thirteen months after his departure from Lisbon, he reached Goa; the most wretched of mankind to the eye of any casual observer, but, in the esteem of his shipmates, the happiest and the most holy.

At Goa Xavier was shocked, and, had he been susceptible of fear, would have been dismayed, by the almost universal depravity of the inhabitants. It exhibited itself in those revolting forms which characterise the crimes of civilised men, when settled among a feebler race, and released from the restraints and conventional decencies of civilisation. Swinging a huge bell in his hand, Xavier passed along the streets of the city, imploring the astonished crowd to send their children to him to be instructed in the religion which they continued at least to profess. Though he had never been addressed by the soul-stirring name of father, he knew that there is one chord which can never be wholly out of tune in the hardest and the most dissolute heart which has once felt the parental instinct. A crowd of little ones were quickly placed under his charge. He lived among them, at once the most laborious of teachers and the gentlest and gayest of friends; and then returned them to their homes, that, by their example, they might there impart, with the unconscious eloquence of filial love, the lessons of wisdom and of piety which they had been taught.

No cry of human misery reached him in vain. He took up his abode in the hospitals; selecting that of the leprous as the object of his peculiar care. Even in the haunts of debauchery, and at the tables of the profligate, he was to be seen an honoured and a welcome guest. He delighted that most unmeet audience with the vivacity of his discourse; and spared neither pungent jests to render vice ridiculous, nor sportive flatteries to allure the fallen back to the paths of soberness and virtue. These were hazards not to be incurred, even by Francis Xavier, with impunity. Suspicion and reproach followed, and still pursue, these deviations from the

highways of Christian instruction; nor would it perhaps be possible to make a successful defence of all the freedoms into which his ardent zeal occasionally urged him. But strong in purity of purpose, and stronger still in one sacred remembrance, he was content to be called "the friend of publicans and sinners." He had long since deserted the standard of Prudence, the offspring of Forethought, for the banners of Wisdom, the child of Love, and followed them through perils not to be braved with impunity under any less triumphant leaders.

Rugged were the ways along which he was thus conducted. In those times, as in our own, there was a pearl fishery on the western shores of the Strait of Manaar, and then, as now, the pearl divers formed a separate and a degraded caste. It was not till after a residence of many months at Goa that Xavier heard of these people. He heard that they were ignorant and miserable, and he inquired no farther. On that burning shore his bell once more rang out an invitation of mercy, and again were gathered around him troops of inquisitive and docile children. He lived long among these abject fishermen; his only food their rice and water, their huts his only shelter, and a sleep of three hours during the four and twenty the measure of his repose. He became at once their physician, the arbiter in their disputes, and their advocate with the Governor of Goa for the remission of their annual tribute.

He became also their teacher in the doctrines and precepts of Christianity. Destitute as he was, at first, of any acquaintance with their language, the undertaking would have daunted any spirit less ardent than his; and it is, indeed, to this day, disputed, between the members of his order and their antagonists, whether he acquitted himself of it in anything more than outward semblance and unmeaning form.

When the inhabitants of Cape Comorin were delivered by the Portuguese from their Mahomedan invaders, they did homage to their new masters by submitting their persons to the baptismal ablution, though their minds remained as dark as before, and their course of life not less licentious. To these Paravas (so they were called) Xavier proceeded; taking with him two interpreters, appointed to that service by the Bishop of Goa. In a letter to his brethren of the Society of Jesus, dated in January 1544, he thus describes his method of introducing these people to the knowledge of the Christian faith:—

Having carefully selected some of the more intelligent of their number, and especially such of them as could converse both in the Spanish and the Malabar tongues, he laboriously accomplished, by their aid, translations of the Catechism, of the Apostles' Creed, of

the Ten Commandments, of the Lord's Prayer, and of some of the devotional offices of the Church of Rome. After committing these versions to his own memory, he undertook a circuit through the country; summoning the natives to gather round him at each town and village by the sound of his bell, which he rang out on his arrival there. To these assemblages he recited his formularies, repeating them again and again, until they had learnt them by heart. The children, as usual, proved the aptest scholars; and when they were perfect in their tasks, he despatched them to teach what they had thus acquired, to their parents and neighbours.

On every Sunday he preached on the texts thus impressed beforehand on the minds of his hearers; employing, of course, at first, the intervention of his interpreters. These sermons opened with a comment on the Creed; to each article of which his hearers, and especially the candidates for baptism, gave their audible assent. The Commandments were then repeated and explained; each Commandment being succeeded by a prayer (in which the whole assembly joined) for grace to observe it. The Lord's Prayer followed; and the series of congregational offices was closed by Xavier's reciting, in the language of his hearers, an epitome of the Christian faith, and an exhortation to lead a Christian life. Then came the baptism of the catechumens; after which the assembly was dismissed.

In every heathen land which he subsequently visited, Xavier pursued the same method of propagating the faith. A most ineffectual method, in the judgment of his Protestant censors. They have no respect or forgiveness for his barbarous translations into semi-barbarous tongues, of formularies and symbols which the most profound scholars have but imperfectly succeeded in transfusing into the most polished dialects of modern Europe. They find much occasion for mirth in the grotesque accents in which the missionary's unpractised tongue must have preached in a foreign idiom, and in the darkness in which an impromptu interpretation must have involved his sermons. To inject into uncultivated minds thoughts so remote from their antecedent knowledge and conceptions, is pronounced a desperate enterprise; and it is not without a compassionate smile that these critics refer to the prejudice which has ventured to claim the reverence of mankind for such delirious zeal, and so much impotent benevolence.

If this judgment be just, it must at least be acknowledged to be a notable and curious occurrence, that such a man as Francis Xavier first abandoned himself to a life of religious extravagance, and then became the unconscious chronicler of his own folly. He who had taught the learning of his times with high applause at

Paris, was certainly no prating sciolist. The friend and chosen companion of Ignatius Loyola and of Iago Laynez, could not be destitute of that wisdom which is to be gained by converse with the wise. He who had associated with every class of society, from the hospital to the throne, could not be unprovided with the knowledge which the world has to impart. The author of such missionary journals as his could not be wanting in clear good sense; for in that respect they may well challenge comparison with the best performances of the most sober-minded of those who, in our own days, have described their own labours in the same field. Nor could Xavier have been betrayed, as so many are betrayed, into foolishness by knavery; for the most jealous eyes have searched his reports and letters in vain for one wilful deviation from truth, or for so much as a solitary proof that he was actuated by any indirect or sinister designs. Strange then is it, if such a man drew a self-portraiture, full of glaring absurdity, without perceiving it.

It is not improbable that these or some similar censures may have reached his own ears. The sleek, worldly-wise traders of Goa, can scarcely have failed to anticipate them; and as in that case the despised herald of the Gospel can hardly have held his peace, we may, with some plausibility, suppose him to have made to the scorers some such answer as the following:—

“However feeble may be the means by which I endeavour to bring the natives of India into the fold of Christ, they are at least the best means at my command; and woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel! They are also the only means at present taken by any one who calls himself a Christian, to atone for the wrongs inflicted on them by their Christian rulers. If the contumelies cast on my teaching reached me only, they would be insignificant; but let it be well considered whether they will not glance aside from me, and strike against ministrations incomparably higher and holier than mine. When in one day Peter called three thousand converts out of the world — when Philip admitted the Ethiopian into the Church — or when Paul acknowledged the gaoler of Philippi as a brother in Christ — neither Peter, nor Philip, nor Paul had imparted to those proselytes any instruction beyond the first and elementary articles of the faith. When the same great Apostle of the Gentiles wrote his pastoral letters to the Greeks, he employed what to them must have appeared an uncouth and barbarous dialect. When he spoke to the Corinthians, it was not with excellency of speech, but in the foolishness of preaching. When others addressed them in unknown tongues, Paul did not command that the stranger should be silenced, but that his discourse should be interpreted. When He who spoke as never man spake, condescended to appear



on our earth, His mightiest eloquence—that by which He moved, subdued, and penetrated the heart—was the eloquence, not of speech, but of a life of which each painful step was taken at the bidding of love, and under the guidance of wisdom. Be it then the care of myself and of my fellow-labourers to tread, however feebly, and at however great a distance, in the footsteps of our adorable Master. Let us humbly endeavour to evangelise these outcasts of the human family chiefly by our loving-kindness, our self-denial, and our personal sanctity. But with our words also, though spoken with a stammering tongue, and through an imperfect medium, we will endeavour to make known to them the commands delivered by God himself on Sinai, the prayer dictated by Christ himself to His disciples, and the earliest confession of the faith transmitted to us by His Church. The truths we thus speak may indeed appear to the natural man to be foolishness, but by the spiritual man they may be spiritually discerned; for there *are* truths which, though man's wisdom teach them not, are yet effectually taught by Him without whose present aid all teaching is vain, and all wisdom is folly.”

It is not a merely gratuitous conjecture that such would have been the substance of Xavier's apology. It is the burthen of his letters, that the living exhibition of the Christian character is the first great instrument of Christian conquests over idolatry; and that the inculcation of elementary truth is the second. But while he is thus ever mindful of his own responsibility for the souls of the heathen of his own times, he presses with even painful importunity on his correspondents, the importance of providing for a succession to himself of missionaries eminent for holiness and for learning; and, amidst all his fatigues and anxieties, his eye is ever fixed upon the prospects opened by the college which he had established at Goa, for training up natives of India as the future teachers of their countrymen.

It is, indeed, true (though the truth be uttered in the contemptuous tone best calculated to provoke contradiction), that a Christianity, nominal, formal, and external, was, after all, the best fruit to be gathered, or to be rationally expected, from the rude efforts of Xavier for the conversion of the Paravas. But where is that country, and what is that time, in which Christianity has been more than this amongst the great multitude of those who have called and professed themselves Christians? The travellers in the narrow path, who are guided by her vital spirit, have ever been the “chosen few.” The travellers along the broad way, wearing her exterior and visible badges, have ever been the “many called.” And yet he who should induce any heathen people to adopt the

mere ceremonial of the Church, to celebrate her ritual, and to recognise, though but in words, the authority of her Divine Head, would confer on them a blessing exceeding all which mere human philanthropy has ever accomplished or designed. For such is the vivifying influence of the spirit of the Gospel, that it can never long be otherwise than prolific of the highest temporal benefits to all, and of the highest spiritual benefits to some, in every land which acknowledges it as a rule of life and receives it as a system of worship. If Xavier had succeeded so far only as to diffuse through the East that kind and that degree of Christianity which at this day exists amongst the formalists of Europe, such a success would almost justify the papal apotheosis which has assigned to him a throne in heaven and a perennial homage on earth.

It is not without exultation, or indeed without truth, that we are reminded that even to this extent Xavier did not eventually succeed. The triumph over his failure would be abated if due attention were given to the causes of it. His mantle never fell on any of his successors. His place was taken by men of worldly minds and of worldly policy. They recited his formularies, but did not imitate his holiness, and found (as how could they but find?) that with the spirit of his apostolate the power of it had departed. Ere long the Portuguese were expelled from India. They had conquered there, but had not colonised; and in these later ages colonisation has been the habitual, perhaps the indispensable, forerunner of the Gospel among barbarous or half civilised tribes. When Christianity becomes the religion of the highest caste, as in the transatlantic continents and colonies, in Western and in Southern Africa, and in the great Australian islands, converts from heathenism are to be counted by millions. For idolatry, being not a principle, but a mere habit, has ever fallen, and will ever fall down in the presence of Truth, when Truth presents herself sustained by power and arrayed in dignity. We shall christianise India in proportion as we Anglicise her. If in Xavier's days England had been sovereign of the East, that renovating process would ere now have been complete; and by this time Brahma and Veeshnu would have retired in the peninsula into the same position which Odin and Woden are now occupying in Scandinavia.

Doubtless the superstitions with which the creed of the Church of Rome has disfigured the Gospel, contributed largely to prevent or to impair Xavier's success. Yet if they who followed him had been men of a like spirit with his, as well as of the same creed, and if his nation had retained and colonised her Asiatic dominion, that which has happened in the transatlantic conquests of the great Roman Catholic powers, would also have happened in the Eastern

empire of the House of Braganza; and India would at present be overspread with Christian churches, acknowledging the Pope as their supreme earthly head, and revering Francis Xavier as their great spiritual progenitor.

Between the eulogists and the censors of Xavier it is still further debated whether the ultimate ill-success of his missions is or is not to be ascribed to his ignorance of the languages of India. His friends maintain that the miraculous gift of tongues fell upon him while residing near Cape Comorin. His opponents deny that he ever acquired the vernacular speech of that country at all. The real difficulty is to determine which of these two opinions is the more extravagant. His imputed ignorance of the native tongue of those amongst whom he so long lived, and for whom he laboured with such fervent zeal, is hardly less incredible than the supposed miraculous intervention to impart it to him. If, at the end of several years, he had not acquired the power of conversing intelligibly with his followers, the idlest lad from the East India College at Haylebury, now stationed in those regions, may boast of an energy and of talents surpassing those of Francis Xavier; and he who was at once a Spanish Cavalier and a devoted missionary, must have deliberately and repeatedly suggested in his letters falsehoods enough to rack the conscience of a Christian with remorse, and to crimson the cheek of a gentleman with self-reproach. The fact seems to be that Xavier was at best but a moderate linguist, and that he never acquired the perfect command of any language except his own. At the commencement of each of his successive missions he acknowledges and bewails his inability to make any colloquial use of the tongues spoken by the people amongst whom he had arrived. Yet, from the commencement of each, he recited to wondering crowds such translations as he could obtain of the creeds and formularies of the faith; aiding the defects of his discourse by tones and gestures which spoke to the imagination and to the hearts of his hearers. Ere long, however, he seems to have learnt to converse, to argue, and to preach among every new assemblage of his Asiatic disciples at least intelligibly, though perhaps never with elegance or correctness. But among such a people, and on such topics, a man of fervent spirit, of natural eloquence, and of high rank, need not be either correct or elegant in order to be impressive.

Whatever may have been the ultimate fate of Xavier's missions, or the cause of their decay, it is nothing more than wanton scepticism to doubt that, in his own lifetime, the apparent results were such as to justify the most sanguine of his anticipations. Near Cape Comorin he appointed thirty different teachers, who under himself were to preside over the same number of Christian churches.

Many an humble cottage there was surmounted by a crucifix, the mark of its consecration to public worship, and many a rude countenance reflected the sorrows and the hopes which they had been taught to associate with that sacred emblem.

In reporting these labours to his society, the habitual calmness of Xavier's style is once, at least, interrupted by passionate exclamations. "I have left myself," he says, "nothing to add on this subject, except that so intense and abundant are the delights which God is accustomed to bestow on those who labour diligently in His service in the vineyard in this barbarous land, that if there be, in this life, any true and solid enjoyment, I believe it to be this and this alone. There is one among those who are so employed," (he is obviously referring to himself), "whom I frequently overhear saying, 'Overwhelm me not, O my God, with such happiness in this life! or if, of Thine infinite beneficence and mercy, Thou shalt be pleased still to bestow it upon me, then take me hence to the abode of the blessed; for he whose inward sense has once tasted of these delights, must needs regard existence as a heavy burden so long as it is passed without the beatic vision of Thyself.'"

This prayer for some mitigation of his happiness was not unanswered. A hostile invasion from the kingdom of Bisnagore swept before it the poor fishermen of Cape Comorin, destroyed their simple chapels, and drove them for refuge to the barren rocks and sand banks on the western shores of the Strait of Manaar. The tidings brought their good father Xavier, on the wings of love, to share and solace their affliction, to procure for them food and succour from the viceroy at Goa, and to direct their confidence to an infinitely better Father, whose presence they might acknowledge, and whose goodness they might adore, even amidst the wreck of all their earthly possessions.

To teach the same salutary lesson to those on whom such possessions had been bestowed in far more ample abundance, Xavier crossed the peninsula to Travancore, in the hope of converting the Rajah and his courtiers. His anxious friends earnestly dissuaded a journey so full of peril; and the language in which he repels these timid counsels might pass for a quotation from one of the indignant letters of Martin Luther. "There are moments," he says, "when I am weary of life, and when I think that it would be better to die in the cause of God than to witness such a contemptuous disregard of his authority as I am at once constrained to observe and unable to prevent. To escape from the sight and the report of such iniquity, how gladly would I migrate into Ethiopia, or into the dominions of Prester John, where, without meeting opposition from any one, I might render so many services to the Most



High. For nothing afflicts me so acutely as my want of power to make an effectual resistance to those who are insulting the majesty of Heaven. May God pardon them, abide with you, and accompany me."

If any reliance may be placed on his own statements, his success at Travancore justified his daring and surpassed his highest expectations. He reported in February, 1545, that God had brought many of the inhabitants to the faith, and had, by his means, converted more than ten thousand men in a single month. Passing from one village to another, he repeated the same formularies which he had recited among the Paravas, and founded on them the same instructions. He baptized till his hands dropped with weariness and his voice became inaudible; experiencing, as he says, in his whole soul, a joy which it would be vain to attempt to express either in writing or by speech.

It is difficult, or rather impossible, to determine what deduction would have been made from Xavier's estimate of the results of his mission to Travancore, if tried by those sober tests which he was himself too deeply agitated to employ. Some part of his success may have been a mere hallucination of his own overwrought feelings. Something may be ascribed to the terror with which the Portuguese arms had at that time affected the native powers of India, and disposed them to conciliate their European invaders. The ancient traditions of Christianity which had lingered in that part of the peninsula from remote days (the traditions of St. Thomas's residence there is a modern fable), may have given the appearance of a conquest to what was, at least to some extent, a mere restoration. But when every abatement which these and similar considerations may suggest shall have been made, we must reject testimony the most unambiguous, and opposed by no conflicting evidence, if we deny the general truth of Xavier's statement. A solitary, poor, and unprotected stranger, he had burst through the barriers which separate men of different races and of different tongues. His meaning may have been ill understood, but by some mysterious force of sympathy his hearers quickly caught his ardour. Idols and their temples fell beneath the blows of their former worshippers. Christian churches rose at his bidding; and Travancore was possessed with new ideas, and agitated by unwonted controversies.

Amongst the triumphs of the Gospel thus wrought by his own agency, Xavier refers, with expressions of intense delight, to the vast multitude of infants whom he had baptized, and whom death had transferred to Paradise, in the untarnished bloom of their baptismal innocence; and he vehemently implores his general and

associates to increase the number of the missionaries in the same field, from which, by this simple process, so vast a harvest of these tender plants might be continually gathered into the heavenly garner. Those who believe, with him, in this astounding efficacy of the sacrament of baptism, must needs number him among the greatest benefactors of his species ; for no other man ever brought down, by his ministration, a blessing of such unutterable magnitude on so vast a multitude of babes and sucklings. It is, indeed, a subject of curious inquiry, why the adherents of that doctrine do not arise to the more than human, and yet easy, office of love which invites them? By employing a few active emissaries to baptize infant Hindoos, they would confer, on the race of man, benefits infinitely eclipsing all the results of all the labours of all the philanthropists who have trodden this earth from the days of Adam to our own. Why, then, is this mighty work of benevolence unattempted? It is because they who are driven by a tyrannical logic to these most marvellous consequences, escape the pressure of them by something which is superior to all logic and proof against all argumentation ; even by those indestructible instincts of our nature, and by that free spirit of the Gospel, which will dash to pieces the inference and the belief, that the Almighty Father of us all has really made the eternal weal or woe of our children to depend on the observance or neglect of an ablution to be sprinkled by the hands, and of a benediction to be pronounced by the lips, of mortal man.

Against these innovations of Xavier, the Brahmins argued—as the Church by law established has not seldom argued—with fire and sword, and the interdict of earth and water to the enemies of their repose. A foreign invader threw a still heavier sword into the trembling scales. From the southward appeared on the borders of Travancore the same force which had swept away the poor fishermen of Malabar. Some embers of Spanish chivalry still glowed in the bosom of Xavier. He flew to the scene of the approaching combat, and there, placing himself in the van of the protecting army, poured forth a passionate prayer to the Lord of Hosts, raised on high his crucifix, and, with kindling eyes, and far-resounding voice, delivered the behests of Heaven to the impious invaders. So runs the tale, and ends (it is almost superfluous to add) in the rout of the astounded foe. It is a matter of less animated, and perhaps of more authentic history, that for his services in this war Xavier was rewarded by the unbounded gratitude of the Rajah, was honoured with the title of his Great Father, and rescued from all further Brahminical persecution.

Power and courtly influence form an intoxicating draught even

when raised to the lips of an ascetic and a saint. Holy as he was, the Great Father of the Rajah of Travancore seems not entirely to have escaped this feverish thirst. Don Alphonso de Souza, a weak though amiable man, was at that time the Viceroy of Portuguese India; and Xavier (such was now his authority) despatched a messenger to Lisbon to demand rather than advise his recall. For within the limits of his high commission (and what subject is wholly foreign to it?) the ambassador of the King of Kings may owe respect but hardly deference to any mere earthly monarch. So argued Francis, so judged King John, and so fell Alphonso de Souza, as many a greater statesman has fallen, and may yet fall, under the weight of sacerdotal displeasure.

Weakness, however, was not the only recorded fault of De Souza. Towards the northern extremity of Ceylon lies the Island of Manaar, a dependency, in Xavier's day, of the adjacent kingdom of Jaffna, where then reigned a sort of Oriental Philip II. The islanders had become converts to the Christian faith, and expiated their apostasy by their lives. Six hundred men, women and children fell in one royal massacre; and the tragedy was closed by the murder of the eldest son of the King of Jaffna, by his father's orders. Deposition in case of misgovernment, and the transfer to the deposing power of the dominions of the offender, was no invention of Hastings or of Clive. It is one of the most ancient constitutional maxims of the European dynasties in India. It may even boast the venerable suffrage of St. Francis Xavier. At his instance, De Souza equipped an armament to hurl the guilty ruler of Jaffna from his throne, and to subjugate his territories to the most faithful King. In the invading fleet the indignant saint led the way, with promises of triumphs, both temporal and eternal. But the expedition failed. Cowardice or treachery defeated the design. De Souza paid the usual penalties of ill success. Xavier sailed away to discover other fields of spiritual warfare.

On the Malabar coast, near the city of Meliapor, might be seen in those times an oratory in which St. Thomas, the first teacher of Christianity in India, was supposed to have worshipped, and a tomb in which it was believed that his body had been laid. It was in a cool and sequestered grotto that, according to this local tradition, the Apostle had been wont to pray; and there yet appeared on the living rock, in bold relief, the cross at which he was said to have knelt, with a crystal fountain of medicinal waters gushing from the base of it. In a church on the neighbouring height was a marble altar, on which (according to the same legend) might still be traced, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, indelible blood-stains, ascertaining the sacred spot at which the Apostle had

won the crown of martyrdom, and where his bones had been committed to the dust. To this venerable shrine Xavier retired to learn the will of Heaven concerning his future progress. If we may believe the oath of one of his fellow-pilgrims, he maintained, on this occasion, for seven successive days, an unbroken fast and silence — no unfit preparation for his approaching conflicts. Even round the tomb of the Apostle malignant demons prowl by night; and, though strong in the guidance of the Virgin, Xavier not only found himself in their obscene grasp, but received from them blows, such as no weapons in human hands could have inflicted, and which had nearly brought to a close his labours and his life. Baffled by a superior power, the fiends opposed a still more subtle hindrance to his designs against their kingdom. In the garb, and in the outward semblance of a band of choristers, they disturbed his devotions by such soul-subduing strains, that the very harmonies of Heaven might seem to have been awakened to divert the Christian warrior from his heavenward path. All in vain their fury and their guile! He found the direction he implored; and the first bark which sailed from the Malabar shore to the city of Malacca, bore the obedient missionary to that great emporium of eastern commerce.

Thirty years before the arrival of Xavier, Malacca had been conquered by Alphonso Albuquerque. It was a place abandoned to every form of sensual and enervating indulgence. Through her crowded streets a strange and solemn visitor passed along, pealing his accustomed bell, and earnestly imploring the prayers of the faithful for that guilty people. Curiosity and alarm soon gave way to ridicule; but Xavier's panoply was complete. The messenger of divine wrath judged this an unfit occasion for courting aversion or contempt. He became the gayest of the gay, and, in address, at least, the very model of an accomplished cavalier. Foiled at their own weapons, his dissolute countrymen acknowledged the irresistible authority of a self-devotion so awful, relieved, and embellished, as it was, by every social grace. Thus the work of reformation prospered, or seemed to prosper. Altars rose in the open streets, the confessional was thronged by penitents, translations of devout books were multiplied; and the saint, foremost in every toil, applied himself with all the activity of his spirit to study the structure and the graceful pronunciation of the Malayan tongue. But the plague was not thus to be stayed. A relapse into all their former habits filled up the measure of their crimes. With prophetic voice Xavier announced the impending chastisements of Heaven; and shaking off from his feet the dust of the obdurate city, pursued his indefatigable way to Amboyna.



That island, then a part of the vast dominions of Portugal in the east, had scarcely witnessed the commencement of Xavier's exertions, when a fleet of Spanish vessels appeared in hostile array on the shores. They were invaders, and even corsairs; for their expedition had been disavowed by Charles V. Pestilence, however, was raging among them; and Xavier was equally ready to hazard his life in the cause of Portugal, or in the service of her afflicted enemies. Day and night he lived in the infected ships, soothing every spiritual distress, and exerting all the magical influence of his name to procure for the sick whatever might contribute to their recovery or soothe their pains. The coals of fire thus heaped on the heads of the pirates, melted hearts otherwise steeled to pity; and to Xavier belonged the rare, perhaps the unrivalled glory of repelling an invasion by no weapons but those of self-denial and of love.

But glory, the praise of men, or their gratitude, what were these to him! As the Spaniards retired peacefully from Amboyna, he, too, quitted the half-adoring multitude, whom he had rescued from the horrors of a pirate's war, and, spurning all the timid counsels which would have stayed his course, proceeded, as the herald of good tidings, to the half-barbarous islands of the neighbouring Archipelago. "If those lands," such was his indignant exclamation, "had scented woods and mines of gold, Christians would find courage to go there; nor would all the perils of the world prevent them. They are dastardly and alarmed, because there is nothing to be gained there but the souls of men; and shall love be less hardy and less generous than avarice? They will destroy me, you say, by poison. It is an honour to which such a sinner as I am may not aspire; but this I dare to say, that whatever form of torture or of death awaits me, I am ready to suffer it ten thousand times for the salvation of a single soul." Nor was this the language of a man insensible to the sorrows of life, or really unaffected by the dangers he had to incur. "Believe me, my beloved brethren," (the quotation is made from a letter written by him at this time to the Society at Rome), "it is in general easy to understand the evangelical maxim, that he who will lose his life shall find it. But when the moment of action has come, and when the sacrifice of life for God is to be really made, oh then, clear as at other times the meaning is, it becomes deeply obscure! so dark, indeed, that he alone can comprehend it, to whom, in His mercy, God himself interprets it. Then it is we know how weak and frail we are."

Weak and frail he may have been; but from the days of Paul of Tarsus to our own, the annals of mankind exhibit no other

example of a soul borne onward so triumphantly through distress and danger in all their most appalling aspects. He battled with hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and assassination ; and pursued his mission of love, with even increasing ardour, amidst the wildest war of the contending elements. At the island of Moro (one of the group of the Moluccas) he took his stand at the foot of a volcano ; and as the pillar of fire threw up its wreaths to heaven, and the earth tottered beneath him, and the firmament was rent by falling rocks and peals of unintermitting thunder, he pointed to the fierce lightnings, and the river of molten lava, and called on the agitated crowd which clung to him for safety, to repent, and to obey the truth ; but he also taught them that the sounds which racked their ears were the groans of the infernal world, and the sights which blasted their eyes an outbreak from the atmosphere of the place of torment. Repairing for the celebration of mass to an edifice which he had consecrated for the purpose, an earthquake shook the building to its base. The terrified worshippers fled, but Xavier, standing in meek composure before the rocking altar, deliberately completed that mysterious sacrifice, with a faith at least in this instance enviable, in the real presence ; rejoicing, as he states in his description of the scene, to perceive that the demons of the island thus winged their flight before the archangel's sword, from the place where they had so long exercised their foul dominion. There is no schoolboy of our days who could not teach much, unsuspected by Francis Xavier, of the laws which govern the material and the spiritual worlds. But we have not many doctors who know as much as he did of the nature of Him by whom the worlds of matter and of spirit were created ; for he studied in the school of protracted martyrdom and active philanthropy, where are divulged secrets unknown and unimagined by the wisest and the most learned of ordinary men. Imparting everywhere such knowledge as he possessed, he ranged over no small part of the Indian Archipelago ; and at length retraced his steps to Malacca, that he might learn whether his exhortations and his prayers might even yet avert her threatened doom.

It appeared to be drawing nigh. Alaradin, a Mahomedan chief of Sumatra, had laid siege to the place at the head of a powerful fleet and army. Ill provided for defence by land, the Portuguese garrison was still more unprepared for a naval resistance. Seven shattered barks, unfit for service, formed their whole maritime strength. Universal alarm overspread the city, and the governor himself at once partook and heightened the general panic. Already thoughts of capitulation had become familiar to the besieged ; and European chivalry had bowed in abject silence to

the insulting taunts and haughty menaces of the Moslem. At this moment, in his slight and weatherbeaten pinnace, the messenger of peace on earth effected an entrance into the beleaguered harbour. But he came with a loud and indignant summons to the war; for Xavier was still a Spanish cavalier, and he "thought it foul scorn" that gentlemen, subjects of the most faithful King, should thus be bearded by barbaric enemies, and the worshippers of Christ defied by the disciples of the Arabian impostor. He assumed the direction of the defence. By his advice the seven dismantled ships were promptly equipped for sea. He assigned to each a commander; and, having animated the crews with promises of both temporal and eternal triumphs, despatched them to meet and conquer the hostile fleet. As they sailed from the harbour, the admiral's vessel ran aground, and instantly became a wreck. Returning hope and exultation as promptly gave way to terror; and Xavier, the idol of the preceding hour, was now the object of popular fury. He alone retained his serenity. He upbraided the cowardice of the governor, revived the spirits of the troops, and encouraged the multitude with prophecies of success. Again the flotilla sailed, and a sudden tempest drove it to sea. Day after day passed without intelligence of its safety, and once more the hearts of the besieged failed them. Rumours of defeat were rife. The Mahomedans, it was said, had effected a landing within six leagues of the city, and Xavier's name was repeated from mouth to mouth with cries of vengeance. He knelt before the altar, though the menacing people were scarcely restrained by the sanctity of the place from immolating him there as a victim to his own disastrous counsels. On a sudden his bosom was seen to heave as with some deep emotion; he raised aloft his crucifix, and with a glowing cheek, and in tones like one possessed, breathed a short yet passionate prayer for victory. A solemn pause ensued; the dullest eye could see that within that now fainting, pallid, agitated frame, some power more than human was in communion with the weak spirit of man. What might be the ineffable sense thus conveyed from mind to mind, without the aid of symbols or of words! One half hour of deep and agonising silence held the awe-stricken assembly in breathless expectation — when, bounding on his feet, his countenance radiant with joy, and his voice clear and ringing as with the swelling notes of the trumpet, he exclaimed, "Christ has conquered for us! At this very moment his soldiers are charging our defeated enemies; they have made a great slaughter—we have lost only four of our defenders. On Friday next the intelligence will be here, and we shall then see our fleet again." The catastrophe of such a tale need not be told. Malacca

followed her deliverer and the troops of the victorious squadron, in solemn procession to the church ; where, amidst the roar of cannon, the pealing of anthems, and hymns of adoring gratitude, his inward sense heard and revered that inarticulate voice which still reminded him, that for him the hour of repose and triumph might never come, till he should reach that state where sin would no longer demand his rebuke, nor grief his sympathy. He turned from the half-idolatrous shouts of an admiring people, and retraced his toilsome way to the shores of the Indian peninsula.

He returned to Goa a poor and solitary, but no longer an obscure man. From the Indus to the Yellow Sea, had gone forth a vague and marvellous rumour of him. The tale bore that a stranger had appeared in the semblance of a wayworn, abject beggar, who, by some magic influence, and for some inscrutable ends, had bowed the nations to his despotic will, while spurning the wealth, the pleasures, and the homage which they offered to their conqueror. Many were the wonders which travellers had to tell of his progress, and without number were the ingenious theories afloat for the solution of them. He possessed the gift of ubiquity; he could at the same moment speak in twenty different tongues on as many dissimilar subjects; he was impassive to heat, cold, hunger, and fatigue; he held hourly intercourse with invisible beings, the guides or ministers of his designs; he raised the dead to life, and could float, when so it pleased him, across the boiling ocean on the wings of the typhoon. Among the listeners to these prodigies had been Auger, a native and inhabitant of Japan. His conscience was burdened with the memory of great crimes, and he had sought relief in vain from many an expiatory rite, and from the tumults of dissipation. In search of the peace he could not find at home he sailed to Malacca, there to consult with the mysterious person of whose *avatar* he had heard. But Xavier was absent; and the victim of remorse was retracing his melancholy voyage to Japan, when a friendly tempest arrested his retreat, and once more brought him to Malacca. He was attended by two servants, and with them, by Xavier's directions, he proceeded to Goa. In these three Japanese his prophetic eye had at once seen the future instruments of the conversion of their native land; and to that end he instructed them to enter on a systematic course of training in the college, which he had established for such purposes, at the seat of Portuguese empire in the east. At that place Xavier, ere long, rejoined his converts. Such had been their proficiency, that, soon after his arrival, they were admitted not only into the Church by baptism, but into the Society of Jesus by the performance of the spiritual exercises.

The history of Xavier now reaches a not unwelcome pause. He



pined for solitude and silence. He had been too long in constant intercourse with man, and found that, however high and holy may be the ends for which social life is cultivated, the habit, if unbroken, will impair that inward sense through which alone the soul can gather any true intimations of her nature and her destiny. He retired to commune with himself in a seclusion where the works of God alone were to be seen, and where no voices could be heard but those which, in each varying cadence, raise an unconscious hymn of praise and adoration to their Creator. There for a while reposing from labours such as few other of the sons of men have undergone, he consumed days and weeks in meditating prospects beyond the reach of any vision unenlarged by the habitual exercise of beneficence and piety. There, too, it may be (for man must still be human), he surrendered himself to dreams as baseless, and to ecstasies as devoid of any real meaning, as those which haunt the cell of the maniac. Peace be to the hallucinations, if such they were, by which the giant refreshed his slumbering powers, and from which he roused himself to a conflict never again to be remitted till his frame, yielding to the ceaseless pressure, should sink into a premature but hallowed grave.

Scarcely four years had elapsed from the first discovery of Japan by the Portuguese, when Xavier, attended by Auger and his two servants, sailed from Goa to convert the islanders to the Christian faith. Much good advice had been, as usual, wasted on him by his friends. To Loyola alone he confided the secret of his confidence. "I cannot express to you" (such are his words) "the joy with which I undertake this long voyage; for it is full of extreme perils, and we consider a fleet sailing to Japan as eminently prosperous in which one ship out of four is saved. Though the risk far exceeds any which I have hitherto encountered, I shall not decline it; for our Lord has imparted to me an interior revelation of the rich harvest which will one day be gathered from the cross when once planted there." Whatever may be thought of these voices from within, it is at least clear, that nothing magnanimous or sublime has ever yet proceeded from those who have listened only to the voices from without. But, as if resolved to show that a man may at once act on motives incomprehensible to his fellow-mortals, and possess the deepest insight into the motives by which they are habitually governed, Xavier left behind him a code of instructions for his brother missionaries, illuminated in almost every page by that profound sagacity which results from the union of extensive knowledge with acute observation, mellowed by the intuitive wisdom of a compassionate and lowly heart. The science of self-conquest, with a view to conquer the stubborn will

of others—the art of winning admission for painful truth—and the duties of fidelity and reverence in the attempt to heal the diseases of the human spirit—were never taught by uninspired man with an eloquence more gentle, or an authority more impressive.

A long voyage, pursued through every disaster which the malevolence of man and demons could oppose to his progress (for he was constrained to sail in a piratical ship, with idols on her deck and whirlwinds in her path), brought him, in the year 1549, to Japan, there to practise his own lessons, and to give a new example of heroic perseverance. His arrival had been preceded by what he regarded as fortunate auguries. Certain Portuguese merchants, who had been allowed to reside at the principal seaport, inhabited there a house haunted by spectres. Their presence was usually announced by the din of discordant and agonising screams; but when revealed to the eye, they exhibited forms resembling those which may be seen in pictures of the infernal state. Now the merchants, secular men though they were, had exorcised these fiends by carrying the cross in solemn procession through the house; and anxious curiosity pervaded the city for some explanation of the virtue of this new and potent charm. There were also legends current through the country which might be turned to good account. Xaca, the son of Amida, the *Virgo Deipara* of Japan, had passed a life of extreme austerity to expiate the sins of men, and had inculcated a doctrine in which even Christians must recognise a large admixture of sacred truth. Temples in honour of the mother and child overspread the land, and suicidal sacrifices were daily offered in them. The Father of Lies had further propped up his kingdom in Japan by a profane parody on the institutions of the Catholic Church. Under the name of the Saco, there reigned in sacerdotal supremacy a counterpart of the holy father at Rome, who consecrated the Fundi or Bishops of this Japanese hierarchy, and regulated at his infallible will whatever related to the rites and ceremonies of public worship. Subordinate to the Fundi were the Bonzes, or Priests in holy orders; who, to complete the resemblance, taught, and at least professed to practise, an ascetic discipline. But here the similitude ceases; for, adds the Chronicle, they were great knaves and sad hypocrites.

With these foundations on which to build, the ideas which Xavier had to introduce into the Japanese mind, might not very widely jar with those by which they were preoccupied. Auger, now called Paul of the Holy Faith, was despatched to his former friend and sovereign, with a picture of the Virgin and the infant Jesus; and the monarch and his courtiers (we are told) admired, kissed, and worshipped the sacred symbols. Xavier himself (to use his own

words) “ stood by, a mere mute statue ; ” but there was Promethean fire within, and the marble soon found a voice. Of all his philological achievements this was the most marvellous. He who, in the decline of life, bethinks him of all that he once endured to unlock the sense of *Æschylus*, and is conscious how stammering has been the speech with which, in later days, he has been wont to mutilate the tongues of *Pascal* and of *Tasso*, may think it a fable that, in a few brief weeks, *Xavier* could converse and teach intelligibly in the involved and ever-shifting dialects of Japan. If the sceptic had ever studied to converse with living men under the impulse of some passion which had absorbed every faculty of his soul, he might perhaps relax his incredulity ; but whatever be the solution, the fact is attested on evidence which it would be folly to discredit — that within a very short time *Xavier* began to open to the Japanese, in their own language and to their clear understanding, the commission with which he was charged. Such, indeed, was his facility of speech, that he challenged the Bonzes to controversies on all the mysterious points of their and his conflicting creeds. The arbiters of the dispute listened as men are apt to listen to the war of words ; and many a long-tailed Japanese head was shaken, as if in the hope that the jumbling thoughts within would find their level by the oft-repeated oscillation. It became necessary to resort to other means of winning their assent ; and in exploits of asceticism, *Xavier* had nothing to fear from the rivalry of Bonzes, of Fundi, or of the great *Saco* himself. *Cangoxima* acknowledged, as most other luxurious cities would perhaps acknowledge, that he who had such a mastery over his own appetites and passions, must be animated by some power wholly exempt from any such debasing influence. To fortify this salutary though not very sound conclusion, *Xavier* betook himself (if we will believe his historian) to the working of miracles. He compelled the fish to fill the nets of the fishermen, and to frequent the bay of *Cangoxima*, though previously indisposed to do so. He cured the leprous, and he raised the dead. Two Bonzes became the first, and indeed the only fruits of his labours there. The hearts of their brethren grew harder as the light of truth glowed with increasing but ineffectual brightness around them. The King also withdrew his favour ; and *Xavier*, with two companions, carried the rejected messages of mercy to the neighbouring states of the Japanese empire.

Carrying on his back his only viaticum, the vessels requisite for performing the sacrifice of the mass, he advanced to *Firando*, at once the seaport and the capital of the kingdom of that name. Some Portuguese ships riding at anchor there, announced his arrival in all the forms of nautical triumph :— flags of every hue floating

from the masts, seamen clustering on the yards, cannon roaring from beneath, and trumpets braying from above. Firando was agitated with debate and wonder; all asked, but none could afford, an explanation of the homage rendered by the wealthy traders to the meanest of their countrymen. The solution of the enigma was given by the humble pilgrim himself, surrounded, in the royal presence, by all the pomp which the Europeans could display in his honour. Great was the effect of these auxiliaries to the work of an evangelist; and the modern, like the ancient Apostle, ready to become all things to all men, would no longer decline the abasement of assuming, for a moment, this world's grandeur, when he found that such puerile arts might allure the children of the world to listen to the voice of wisdom. At Meaco, then the seat of empire in Japan, so useful a discovery might be reduced to practice with still more important success; and thitherwards his steps were promptly directed.

Unfamiliar to the ears of us barbarians of the North-Western Ocean are the very names of the seats of Japanese civilisation through which his journey lay. At Amanguchi, the capital of Nagoto, he found the hearts of men hardened by sensuality; and his exhortations to repentance were repaid by showers of stones and insults. "A pleasant sort of Bonze, indeed, who would allow us but one God and one woman!" was the summary remark with which the luxurious Amanguchians disposed of the teacher and his doctrine. They drove him forth half naked, with no provision but a bag of parched rice, and accompanied only by three of his converts — men prepared to share his danger and his reproach.

It was in the depth of winter; dense forests, steep mountains, half-frozen streams, and wastes of untrodden snow, lay in his path to Meaco. An entire month was consumed in traversing the wilderness; the cruelty and scorn of man not seldom adding bitterness to the rigours of nature. On one occasion the wanderers were overtaken in a thick jungle by a horseman bearing a heavy package. Xavier offered to carry the load, if the rider would requite the service by pointing out his way. The offer was accepted; but hour after hour the horse was urged on at such a pace, and so rapidly sped the panting missionary after him, that his tortured feet and excoriated body sank in seeming death under the protracted effort. In the extremity of his distress no repining word was ever heard to fall from him. He performed this dreadful pilgrimage in silent communion with Him for whom he rejoiced to suffer the loss of all things; or spoke only to sustain the hope and courage of his associates. At length the walls of Meaco were seen, promising a repose not ungrateful even to his adamant frame and fiery spirit. But



repose was no more to visit him. He found the city in all the tumult and horrors of a siege. It was impossible to gain attention to his doctrines amidst the din of arms; for even the Saco, or Pope of Japan, could give heed to none but military topics. Chanting from the Psalmist — “When Israel went out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from a strange people,” the Saint again plunged into the desert, and retraced his steps to Amanguchi.

Xavier describes the Japanese very much as a Roman might have depicted the Greeks in the age of Augustus; as at once intellectual and sensual voluptuaries, on the best possible terms with themselves, a good-humoured but faithless race, equally acute and frivolous, talkative and disputatious. — “Their inquisitiveness,” he says, “is incredible, especially in their intercourse with strangers, for whom they have not the slightest respect, but make incessant sport of them.” Surrounded at Amanguchi by a crowd of these babblers, he was plied with innumerable questions about the immortality of the soul, the movement of the planets, eclipses, the rainbow, sin, grace, paradise, and hell. He heard and answered. A single response solved all these problems. Astronomers, meteorologists, metaphysicians, and divines, all heard the same sound; but to each it came with a different and an appropriate meaning. So wrote from the very spot Father Anthony Quadros, four years after the event; and so the fact may be read in the process of Xavier’s canonisation. Possessed of so admirable a gift, his progress in the conversion of these once contemptuous people is the less surprising. Their city became the principal seat of learning in Japan, and therefore, of course, the great theatre of controversial debate. Of these polemics there remains a record of no doubtful authenticity, from which disputants of higher name than those of Amanguchi might take some useful lessons in the dialectic art. Thrusts better made, or more skilfully parried, are seldom to be witnessed in the schools of Oxford or of Cambridge.

In the midst of controversies with men, Xavier again heard that divine voice to which he never answered but by instant and unhesitating submission. It summoned him to Fucheo, the capital of the kingdom of Bungo. It was a city near the sea, which had for its port a place called Figer, where a rich Portuguese merchant ship was then lying. At the approach of the Saint (for such he was now universally esteemed) the vessel thundered from all her guns such loud and repeated discharges, that the startled sovereign of Bungo despatched messengers from Fucheo to ascertain the cause of so universal an uproar. Nothing could exceed the astonishment with which they received the explanation. It was impossible to convey to the monarch’s ear so extravagant a tale. A

royal salute for the most abject of lazars ! for a man (to use their own energetic language) “ so abhorred of the earth that the very vermin which crawled over him loathed their wretched fare ! ” If mortal man ever rose or sunk so far as to discover, without pain, that his person was the object of disgust to others, then is there one form of self-dominion in which Francis Xavier has been surpassed. Yielding, with no perceptible reluctance, to the arguments of his countrymen, and availing himself of the resources at their command, he advanced to Fucheo, preceded by thirty Portuguese clad in rich stuffs, and embellished with chains of gold and precious stones. “ Next came, and next did go,” in their gayest apparel, the servants and slaves of the merchants. Then appeared the apostle of the Indies himself, resplendent in green velvet and golden brocade. Chinese tapestry, and silken flags of every brilliant colour, covered the pinnace and the boats in which this brilliant procession was rowed up to the city ; and the oars rose and fell to the sound of trumpets, flutes, and hautboys. As they drew near to the royal presence, the commander of the ship marched bareheaded, and carrying a wand as the esquire or major-domo of the Father. Five others of her principal officers, each bearing some costly article, stepped along, as proud to do such service ; while he, in honour of whom it was rendered, moved onwards with the majestic gait of some feudal chieftian marshalling his retainers, with a rich umbrella held over him. He traversed a double file of six hundred men-at-arms drawn up for his reception ; and interchanged complimentary harangues with his royal host, with all the grace and dignity of a man accustomed to shine in courts, and to hold intercourse with princes.

His Majesty of Bungo seems to have borne some resemblance to our own Henry the Eighth, and to have been meditating a revolt from the Saco and his whole spiritual dynasty. Much he said at the first interview, to which no orthodox Bonze could listen with composure. It drew down, even on his royal head, the rebuke of the learned Faxiondono. “ How,” exclaimed that eminent divine, “ dare you undertake the decision of any article of faith without having studied at the university of Fianzima, where alone are to be learned the sacred mysteries of the gods ! If you are ignorant, consult the teachers appointed to direct you. Here am I, ready to impart to you all necessary instruction.” An university still more renowned than Fianzima has, in our own times, given birth to many a learned doctor who might pass for nothing more than a servile imitator of the pretensions of the sage Faxiondono. But the replies which the great “ Tractarian ” of Bungo provoked were most unlike those by which his Oxonian successors are usually

assailed. Never was King surrounded by a gayer circle than that which then glittered at the court of Fucheo. The more the Bonze lectured on his own sacerdotal authority, the more laughed they. The King himself condescended to aid the general merriment; and congratulated his monitor on the convincing proof he had given of his heavenly mission, by the display of an infernal temper. To Xavier he addressed himself in a far different spirit. The triple crown might have lighted on his head without allaying the thirst of his soul for the conversion of mankind; and the European pomp with which he was, for the moment, environed, left him still the same living martyr to the faith which it was the one object of his life to propagate. His rich apparel, and the blandishments of the great, served only to present to him, in a new and still more impressive light, the vanity of all sublunary things. He preached, catechised, and disputed with an ardour and a perseverance which threatened his destruction, and alarmed his affectionate followers. "Care not for me," was his answer to their expostulation; "think of me as a man dead to bodily comforts. My food, my rest, my life, are to rescue from the granary of Satan, the souls for the sake of whom God has sent me hither from the ends of the earth." To such fervour the Bonzes of Fucheo could offer no effectual resistance. One of the most eminent of their number cast away his idols, and became a Christian. Five hundred of his disciples immediately followed his example. The King himself, a dissolute unbeliever, so far was moved (and the smallest concessions of the rulers of the earth in such cases must be handsomely acknowledged) as to punish in others the crimes which he persisted in practising himself; and as to confess that the very face of the Saint was as a mirror, reflecting by the force of contrast all the hideousness of his own vices. Revolting, indeed, they were; and faithful were the rebukes of the tongue, no less than of the countenance, of Xavier. The royal offender was at length touched and awed. His conversion was about to crown the labours of his monitor; and the worship of Xaca and Amida in the kingdom of Bungo seemed waning to its close. It was an occasion which demanded from their priesthood every sacrifice; nor was the demand unanswered.

For thirty years the mysteries of the faith of the Bonzes had been taught in the most celebrated of their colleges, by a doctor who had fathomed all divine and human lore; and who, except when he came forth to utter the oracular voice of more than earthly wisdom, withdrew from the sight of men into a sacred retirement, there to hold high converse with the immortals. Fucarondono, for so he was called, announced his purpose to visit the city and palace of Fucheo. As when, in the agony of Agamemnon's camp, the son of

Thetis at length grasped his massive spear, and the trembling sea-shores resounded at his steps—so advanced to the war of words the great chieftain of Japanese theology, and so rose the cry of anticipated triumph from the rescued Bonzes. Terror seized the licentious King himself, and all foreboded the overthrow of Xavier and Christianity. “Do you know, or rather, do you remember me?” was the inquiry with which this momentous debate was opened. “I never saw you till now,” answered the Saint. “A man who has dealt with me a thousand times, and who pretends never to have seen me, will be no difficult conquest,” rejoined the most profound of the Bonzes. “Have you left any of the goods which I bought of you at the port of Frenajona?”—“I was never a merchant,” said the missionary, “nor was I ever at Frenajona.”—“What a wretched memory!” was the contemptuous reply; “It is precisely five hundred years to-day since you and I met at that celebrated mart; when, by the same token, you sold me a hundred pieces of silk, and an excellent bargain I had of it.” From the transmigration of the soul the sage proceeded to unfold the other dark secrets of nature—such as the eternity of matter; the spontaneous self-formation of all organised beings; and the progressive cleansing of the human spirit in the nobler and holier of our race, at each successive change, until they attain to a perfect memory of the past, and are enabled to retrace their wanderings from one body to another through all preceding ages; looking down, from the pinnacles of accumulated wisdom, on the grovelling multitude, whose recollections are confined within the narrow limits of their latest corporeal existence. That Xavier refuted these perplexing arguments we are assured by a Portuguese bystander who witnessed the debate; though unhappily no record of his arguments has come down to us. “I have,” says the historian, “neither science nor presumption enough to detail the subtle and solid reasonings by which the Saint destroyed the vain fancies of the Bonze.”

Yet the victory was incomplete. Having recruited his shattered forces, and accompanied by no less than 3000 Bonzes, Fucarondono returned to the attack. On his side Xavier appeared in the field of controversy attended by the Portuguese officers in their richest apparel. They stood uncovered in his presence, and knelt when they addressed him. Their dispute now turned on many a knotty point;—as, for example, Why did Xavier celebrate masses for the dead, and yet condemn the orthodox Japanese custom of giving to the Bonze bills of exchange payable in favour of the dead? So subtle and difficult were their inquiries, that Xavier and his companion, the reporter of the dispute, were compelled to believe that the spirit of evil had suggested them; and that



they were at last successfully answered, is ascribed to the incessant prayers which, during the whole contest, the Christians offered for their champion. Of this second polemical campaign we have a minute and animated account. It may be sufficient to extract the conclusion of the royal Moderator. "For my own part," he said, "as far as I can judge, I think that Father Xavier speaks rationally, and that the rest of you don't know what you are talking about. Men must have clear heads or less violence than you have to understand these difficult questions. If you are deficient in faith, at least employ your reason, which might teach you not to deny truths so evident; and do not bark like so many dogs." So saying, the King of Bungo dissolved the assembly. Royal and judicious as his award appears to have been, our Portuguese chronicler admits that the disputants on either side returned with opinions unchanged; and that, from that day forward, the work of conversion ceased. He applies himself to find a solution of the problem, why men who had been so egregiously refuted should still cling to their errors; and why any one should obstinately adhere to practices so irrefragably proved to be alike foolish and criminal. The answer, let us hope, is, that the obstinacy of the people of Bungo, was a kind of *lusus nature*, a peculiarity exclusively their own; that other religious teachers are more candid than the Bonzes of Japan; and that no Professor of Divinity could elsewhere be found so obstinately wedded to his own doctrines as was the learned Fucarondono.\*

In such controversies, and in doing the work of an evangelist in every other form, Xavier saw the third year of his residence at Japan gliding away, when tidings of perplexities at the mother church of Goa recalled him thither, across seas so wide and stormy, that even the sacred lust of gold durst hardly brave them in that infancy of the art of navigation. As his ship drove before the monsoon, dragging after her a smaller bark which she had taken in tow, the connecting ropes were suddenly burst asunder, and in

\* It seems necessary to state, that the Portuguese traveller by whom this debate is reported, is Ferdinando Mendez Pinto; on whom Congreve, in "Love for Love," has conferred an unenviable immortality. "Capricorn in your teeth" (exclaims Foresight to Sir Samson Legend); "thou modern Mandeville! Ferdinando Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude." The wits have ever been at war with the travellers; and Abyssinian Bruce sustained, and has survived, still ruder shocks than Pinto the Orientalist suffered at the hands of Congreve. There can be no doubt that he was present with Xavier at Japan; nor is it easy to discover any reason for distrusting this part of his narrative. The text contains only a brief extract from it. If the story be really fictitious, Pinto must have possessed far greater knowledge and talents (especially dramatic talents) than have hitherto been ascribed to him.

a few minutes the two vessels were no longer in sight. Thrice the sun rose and set on their dark course; the unchained elements roaring as in mad revelry around them, and the ocean seething like a cauldron. Xavier's shipmates wept over the loss of friends and kindred in the foundered bark; and shuddered at their own approaching doom. He also wept; but his were grateful tears. As the screaming whirlwind swept over the abyss, the present Deity was revealed to his faithful worshipper, shedding tranquillity, and peace, and joy over the sanctuary of a devout and confiding heart. "Mourn not, my friend," was his gay address to Edward de Gama, as he lamented the loss of his brother in the bark; "before three days, the daughter will have returned to her mother." They were weary and anxious days; but, as the third drew towards a close a sail appeared in the horizon. Defying the adverse winds, she made straight towards them; and at last dropped alongside, as calmly as the sea-bird ends her flight, and furls her ruffled plumage on the swelling surge. The cry of miracle burst from every lip; and well it might. There was the lost bark, and not the bark only, but Xavier himself on board her! What though he had ridden out the tempest in the larger vessel, the stay of their drooping spirits, he had at the same time been in the smaller ship, performing there also the same charitable office; and yet, when the two hailed and spoke each other, there was but one Francis Xavier, and he composedly standing by the side of Edward de Gama, on the deck of the "Holy Cross." Such was the name of the commodore's vessel. For her services on this occasion, she obtained a sacred charter of immunity from risks of every kind; and as long as her timbers continued sound, bounded merrily across seas in which no other craft could have lived.

During this wondrous voyage, her deck had often been paced in deep conference by Xavier and Iago de Pereyra, her commander. Though he pursued the calling of a merchant, he had, says the historian, the heart of a prince. Two great objects expanded the thoughts of Pereyra—the one, the conversion of the Chinese empire; the other, his own appointment as ambassador to the celestial court of Peking. In our puny days, the dreams of traders in the east are of smuggling opium. But in the sixteenth century no enterprise appeared to them too splendid to contemplate, or too daring to hazard. Before the "Holy Cross" had reached Goa, Pereyra had pledged his whole fortune, Xavier his influence and his life, to this gigantic adventure. In the spring of the following year, the apostle and the ambassador (for so far the project had in a few months been accomplished) sailed from Goa in the "Holy Cross," for the then unexplored coasts of China.

As they passed Malacca, tidings came to Xavier of the tardy, though complete, fulfilment of one of his predictions. Pestilence, the minister of Divine vengeance, was laying waste that stiff-necked and luxurious people; but the woe which he had foretold he was the foremost to alleviate. Heedless of his own safety, he raised the sick in his arms and bore them to the hospitals. He esteemed no time, or place, or office, too sacred for this work of mercy. Ships, colleges, churches, all at his bidding became so many lazarettos. Night and day he lived among the diseased and the dying, or quitted them only to beg food or medicine, from door to door, for their relief. For the moment, even China was forgotten; nor would he advance a step, though he were to convert to Christianity a third part of the human race, so long as one victim of the plague demanded his sympathy, or could be directed by him to an ever-present and still more compassionate Comforter. For the career of Xavier (though he knew it not) was now drawing to a close; and with him the time was ripe for practising those deeper lessons of wisdom which he had imbibed from his long and arduous course of discipline.

With her cables bent lay the "Holy Cross" in the port of Malacca, ready at length to convey the embassy to China, when a difficulty arose, which not even the prophetic spirit of Xavier had foreseen. Don Alvaro d'Alayde, the governor, a grandee of high rank, regarded the envoy and his commission with an evil eye. To represent the crown of Portugal to the greatest of earthly monarchs was, he thought, an honour more meet for a son of the house of Alayde, than for a man who had risen from the very dregs of the people. The expected emoluments also exceeded the decencies of a cupidity less than noble. He became of opinion that it was not for the advantage of the service of King John III. that the expedition should proceed. Pereyra appeared before him in the humble garb of a suitor, with the offer of 30,000 crowns as a bribe. All who sighed for the conversion, or for the commerce of China, lent the aid of their intercessions. Envoys, saints, and merchants, united their prayers in vain. Brandishing his cane over their heads, Alvaro swore that, so long as he was governor of Malacca and captain-general of the seas of Portugal, the embassy should move no further. Week after week was thus consumed, and the season was fast wearing away, when Xavier at length resolved on a measure to be justified, even in his eyes, only by extreme necessity. A secret of high significance had been buried in his bosom since his departure from Europe. The time for the disclosure of it had come. He produced a Papal Brief, investing him with the

dignity and the powers of apostolical nuncio in the east. One more hindrance to the conversion of China, and the Church would clothe her neck with thunders. Alvaro was still unmoved; and sentence of excommunication was solemnly pronounced against him and his abettors. Alvaro answered by sequestering the "Holy Cross" herself. Xavier wrote letters of complaint to the king. Alvaro intercepted them. One appeal was still open to the vicar of the vicar of Christ. Prostrate before the altar, he invoked the aid of Heaven; and rose with purposes confirmed and hopes reanimated. In the service of Alvaro, though no longer bearing the embassy to China, the "Holy Cross" was to be despatched to Sancian, an island near the mouth of the Canton river, to which the Portuguese were permitted to resort for trade. Xavier resolved to pursue his voyage so far, and thence proceed to Macao to preach the Gospel there. Imprisonment was sure to follow. But he should have Chinese fellow-prisoners. These at least he might convert; and though his life would pay the forfeit, he should leave behind him, in these first Christians, a band of missionaries who would propagate through their native land the faith which he might only be permitted to plant.

It was a compromise as welcome to Alvaro as to Xavier himself. Again the "Holy Cross" prepared for sea; and the Apostle of the Indies, followed by a grateful and admiring people, passed through the gates of Malacca to the beach. Falling on his face on the earth, he poured forth a passionate, though silent, prayer. His body heaved and shook with the throes of that agonising hour. What might be the fearful portent none might divine, and none presumed to ask. A contagious terror passed from eye to eye, but every voice was hushed. It was as the calm preceding the first thunder peal which is to rend the firmament. Xavier arose; his countenance no longer beaming with its accustomed grace and tenderness, but glowing with a sacred indignation, like that of Isaiah when breathing forth his inspired menaces against the King of Babylon. Standing on a rock amidst the waters, he loosed his shoes from off his feet, smote them against each other with vehement action, and then casting them from him, as still tainted with the dust of that devoted city, he leaped barefooted into the bark, which bore him away for ever from a place from which he had so long and vainly laboured to avert her impending doom.

She bore him, as he had projected, to the island of Sancian. It was a mere commercial factory; and the merchants who passed the trading season there, vehemently opposed his design of penetrating further into China. True he had ventured into the forest there, against the tigers which infested it, with no other



weapon than a vase of holy water ; and the savage beasts, sprinkled with that sacred element, had for ever fled the place ; but the Mandarins were fiercer still than they, and would avenge the preaching of the Saint on the inmates of the factory ; though most guiltless of any design but that of adding to their heap of crowns and moidores. Long years had now passed away since the voice of Loyola had been heard on the banks of the Seine, urging the solemn inquiry, "What shall it profit?" But the words still rung on the ear of Xavier, and were still repeated, though in vain, to his worldly associates at Sancian. They sailed away with their cargoes, leaving behind them only the "Holy Cross," in charge of the officers of Alvaro, and depriving Xavier of all means of crossing the channel to Macao. They left him destitute of shelter and of food, but not of hope. He had heard that the King of Siam meditated an embassy to China for the following year ; and to Siam he resolved to return in Alvaro's vessel ; to join himself, if possible, to the Siamese envoys ; and so at length to force his way into the empire.

But his earthly toils and projects were now to cease for ever. The angel of death appeared with a summons, for which, since death first entered our world, no man was ever more triumphantly prepared. It found him on board the vessel on the point of departing for Siam. At his own request he was removed to the shore, that he might meet his end with the greater composure. Stretched on the naked beach, with the cold blasts of a Chinese winter aggravating his pains, he contended alone with the agonies of the fever which wasted his vital power. It was an agony and a solitude for which the happiest of the sons of men might well have exchanged the dearest society and the purest of the joys of life. It was an agony in which his still-uplifted crucifix reminded him of a far more awful woe endured for his deliverance. It was a solitude thronged by blessed ministers of peace and consolation, visible in all their bright and lovely aspects to the now unclouded eye of faith ; and audible to the dying martyr through the yielding bars of his mortal prison-house, in strains of exulting joy till then unheard and unimagined. Tears burst from his fading eyes, tears of an emotion too big for utterance. In the cold collapse of death his features were for a few brief moments irradiated as with the first beams of approaching glory. He raised himself on his crucifix ; and exclaiming, *In te, Domine, speravi — non confundar in aeternum !* he bowed his head and died.

Why consume many words in delineating a character which can be disposed of in three ? Xavier was a fanatic, a Papist, and a Jesuit. Comprehensive and incontrovertible as the climax is, it

yet does not exhaust the censures to which he is obnoxious. His understanding, that is the mere cogitative faculty, was deficient in originality, in clearness, and in force. It is difficult to imagine a religious dogma which he would not have embraced, at the command of his teachers, with the same infantine credulity with which he received the legends and the creeds which they actually imposed upon him. His faith was not victorious over doubt; for doubt never for one passing moment assailed it. Superstition might boast in him one of the most complete as well as one of the most illustrious of her conquests. She led him through a land peopled with visionary forms, and resounding with ideal voices—a land of prodigies and portents, of ineffable discourse and unearthly melodies. She bade him look on this fair world as on some dungeon unvisited by the breath of heaven; and on the glorious face of nature, and the charms of social life, as so many snares and pitfalls for his feet. At her voice he starved and lacerated his body, and rivalled the meanest pauper in filth and wretchedness. Harder still, she sent him forth to establish among half-civilised tribes a worship which to them was but little more than a new idolatry; and to inculcate a morality in which the more arduous virtues of the Christian life were made to yield precedence to ritual forms and outward ceremonies. And yet, never did the polytheism of ancient or of modern Rome assign a seat among the demi-gods to a hero of nobler mould, or of a more exalted magnanimity, than Francis Xavier.

He lived among men as if to show how little the grandeur of the human soul depends on mere intellectual power. It was his to demonstrate with what vivific rays a heart imbued with the love of God and man may warm and kindle the nations, however dense may be the exhalations through which the giant pursues his course from the one end of heaven to the other. Scholars criticised, wits ridiculed, prudent men admonished, and kings opposed him; but on moved Francis Xavier, borne forward by an impulse which crushed and scattered to the winds all such puny obstacles. In ten short years, as if mercy had lent him wings, and faith an impenetrable armour, he traversed oceans, islands, and continents, through a track equal to more than twice the circumference of our globe; everywhere preaching, disputing, baptizing, and founding Christian churches. There is at least one well-authenticated miracle in Xavier's story. It is, that any mortal man should have sustained such toils as he did; and have sustained them too, not merely with composure, but as if in obedience to some indestructible exigency of his nature. "The Father Master Francis" (the words are those of his associate, Melchior Nunez), "when labouring for the

salvation of idolaters, seemed to act, not by any acquired power, but as by some natural instinct; for he could neither take pleasure nor even exist except in such employments. They were his repose; and when he was leading men to the knowledge and the love of God, however much he exerted himself, he never appeared to be making any effort."

Seven hundred thousand converts (for in these matters Xavier's eulogists are not parsimonious) are numbered as the fruits of his mission; nor is the extravagance so extreme if the word "conversion" be understood in the sense in which they used it. Kings, rajahs, and princes were always, when possible, the first objects of his care. Some such conquests he certainly made; and as the flocks would often follow their shepherds, and as the gate into the Christian fold was not made very strait, it may have been entered by many thousands and tens of thousands. But if Xavier taught the mightly of the earth, it was for the sake of the poor and miserable, and with them he chiefly dwelt. He dwelt with them on terms ill enough corresponding with the vulgar notions of a saint. "You, my friends," said he to a band of soldiers who had hidden their cards at his approach, "belong to no religious order, nor can you pass whole days in devotion. Amuse yourselves. To you it is not forbidden, if you neither cheat, quarrel, nor swear when you play." Then good-humouredly sitting down in the midst of them, he challenged one of the party to a game at chess; and was found at the board by Don Diego Noragua, whose curiosity had brought him from far to see so holy a man, and to catch some fragments of that solemn discourse which must ever be flowing from his lips. The grandee would have died in the belief that the saint was a hypocrite, unless by good fortune he had afterwards (as we are told) chanced to break in on his retirement, and to find him there suspended between earth and heaven, in a rapture of devotion, with a halo of celestial glory encircling his head!

No mention will be found in the letters of Xavier of any such miraculous visitations, or of any other of the supernatural performances ascribed to him by his Church. Such at least is the result of a careful examination of the whole of the five books into which his Epistles are divided. He was too humble a man to think it probable that he should be the depositary of so divine a gift; and too honest to advance any such claims to the admiration of mankind. Indeed he seems to have been amused with the facility with which his friends assented to these prodigies. Two of them repeated to him the tale of his having raised a dead child to life, and pressed him to reveal the truth. "What!" he replied, "I raise the dead! Can you really believe such a thing of a wretch

like me?" Then smiling, he added, "They did indeed place before me a child. They said it was dead, which perhaps was not the case. I told him to get up, and he did so. Do you call that a miracle?" But in this matter Xavier was not allowed to judge for himself. He was a *Thaumaturgus* in his own despite; and this very denial is quoted by his admirers as a proof of his profound humility. Could he, by some second sight, have read the Bull of his own canonisation, he would doubtless, in defiance of his senses, have believed (for belief was always at his command) that the Church knew much better than he did, and that he had been reversing the laws of nature without perceiving it; for at the distance of rather more than half a century from his death, Pope Urban VIII., with the unanimous assent of all the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, in sacred conclave assembled, pledged his papal infallibility to the miracles already recorded, and to many more. And who will be so sceptical as to doubt their reality, when he is informed that depositions, taken in proof of them, were read before that august assembly; and that the apotheosis was opposed there by a learned person, who, as usual in such cases, appeared at their bar in the character, and with the title, of "the Devil's advocate?" A scoffer might indeed suggest that if the lawyer really laboured to refute falsehood, he must have betrayed the interests of his clients; and that the Father of Lies probably instructed his counsel to make a sham fight of it, in order that one lie the more might be established among men in the form of a new idol worship. Without exploring so dark a question, it may be seriously regretted that such old wives' fables have been permitted to sully the genuine history of so many men of whom the world was not worthy, and of none more than Francis Xavier. They have long obscured his real glory, and degraded him to the low level of a vulgar hero of ecclesiastical romance. Stripped of these puerile embellishments, — with no title to the homage due to genius and to learning, — and not included in the number of those who have aided the progress of speculative truth, — he emerges from those lower regions, clad with the mild brilliancy, and resplendent in the matchless beauty, which belong to the human nature, when ripening fast into a perfect union with the divine. He had attained to that childlike affiance in the Author of his being, which gives an unrestrained play to every blameless impulse, even when that awful presence is the most habitually felt. His was a sanctity which, at fitting seasons, could even disport itself in jests and trifling. No man, however abject his condition, disgusting his maladies, or hateful his crimes, ever turned to Xavier without learning that there was at least one



human heart on which he might repose with all the confidence of a brother's love. To his eye the meanest and the lowest reflected the image of Him whom he followed and adored ; nor did he suppose that he could ever serve the Saviour of mankind so acceptably as by ministering to their sorrows, and recalling them into the way of peace. It is easy to smile at his visions, to detect his errors, to ridicule the extravagant austerities of his life, and even to show how much his misguided zeal eventually counteracted his own designs. But with our philosophy, our luxuries, and our wider experience, it is *not* easy for us to estimate or to comprehend the career of such a man. Between his thoughts and our thoughts there is but little in common. Of our wisdom he knew nothing, and would have despised it if he had. Philanthropy was his passion ; reckless daring his delight ; and faith, glowing in meridian splendour, the sunshine in which he walked. He judged or felt (and who shall say that he judged or felt erroneously ?) that the Church demanded an illustrious sacrifice, and that he was to be the victim ;—that a voice which had been dumb for fifteen centuries must at length be raised again, and that to him that voice had been imparted ;—that a new Apostle must go forth to break up the incrustations of man's long-hardened heart, and that to him that apostolate had been committed. So judging or so feeling, he obeyed the summons of him whom he regarded as Christ's vicar on earth, and the echoes from no sublunary region, which the summons seemed to awaken in his bosom. In holding up to reverential admiration such self-sacrifices as his, slight, indeed, is the danger of stimulating an enthusiastic imitation. Enthusiasm ! our pulpits distil their bland rhetoric against it ; but where is it to be found ? Do not our share markets, thronged even by the devout, overlay it—and our rich benefices extinguish it—and our pentecosts, in the dazzling month of May, dissipate it—and our stipendiary missions, and our mitres, decked, even in heathen lands, with jewels and with lordly titles—do they not, as so many lightning conductors, effectually divert it ? There is indeed the lackadaisical enthusiasm of devotional experiences, and the sentimental enthusiasm of religious bazaars, and the oratorical enthusiasm of charitable platforms, and the tractarian enthusiasm of certain well-beneficed ascetics ; but in what, except the name, do they resemble the “God-in-us” enthusiasm of Francis Xavier—of Xavier the magnanimous, the holy, and the gay ; the canonised saint, not of Rome only, but of universal Christendom ; who, if at this hour there remained not a solitary Christian to claim and to rejoice in his spiritual ancestry, should yet live in hallowed and everlasting remembrance, as the man who has bequeathed to these later ages,

at once the clearest proof and the most illustrious example, that even amidst the enervating arts of our modern civilisation, the apostolic energy may still burn with all its primæval ardour in the human soul, when animated and directed by a power more than human.

Xavier died in the year 1552, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and in the eleventh year of his absence from Europe. During his residence in the East, he had maintained a frequent correspondence with the General of his order. Their letters breathe the tenderness which is one of the indispensable elements of the heroic character. But it was a grave though an intense affection, never degenerating into fondness, but chastened by filial reverence on the one side, and by parental authority on the other.

It was, indeed, as a father, or rather as a patriarch, exercising a supreme command over his family, and making laws for their future government, that Ignatius passed the last twenty years of his life. No longer a wanderer through the world, captivating or overawing the minds of men by marvels addressed to their imagination, he dwelt in the ecclesiastical capital of the West, giving form and substance to the visions which had first fallen upon him at the Mount of Ascension, and which had immovably abided with him through every succeeding pilgrimage.

Of the projects of his later days, the most cherished was that of training, at the Central College of the Jesuits at Rome, the pupils who were to propagate his society throughout the world. All languages and all sciences were taught there. The scholars contended with each other in public for literary honours, and exhibited before the learned and the great their skill in dramatic recitation. Such was the solicitude of Ignatius for their improvement, that he invited them to criticise his own colloquial Italian ; for, having acquired that language late in life, he spoke it imperfectly ; and was willing to compromise even his own habitual and well-sustained dignity, if so he might impress on his neophytes the importance of excelling in those vernacular tongues, by the use of which they were destined to encounter and rival their Protestant adversaries.

He was not, however, permitted to devote his declining years to such peaceful pursuits as these ; but yielded to the law which consigns to the life-long hostility of mankind every innovator who either breaks up their inveterate habits, or discredits their cherished maxims.

In Spain, Ignatius was assailed by Melchior Cano, a Dominican monk, by the Archbishop of Toledo, and by the Vicar-General of Saragossa ; all of whom appear to have braved his power, in the secret assurance of support from the Emperor Charles V. Mel-

chior denounced the Jesuits and their General as impostors. Their influence, it is said, consigned him to an honourable banishment as Bishop of the Canaries. But he quickly resigned his mitre, and, resuming his invectives, continued them with impunity till death itself silenced him. The Archbishop launched against the new order hot thunderbolts of interdicts and excommunications, as usurpers of his archiepiscopal privileges; and, though Ignatius met the storm with papal briefs and edicts from the royal council, he was compelled to propitiate his powerful antagonist by humiliating submissions. Encouraged perhaps by this success of his neighbour, the Vicar-General of Saragossa brought into the field against the same enemies the same spiritual artillery of mandates and anathemas. Alarmed to find themselves thus cut off from all Christian offices, and from all the sacraments of the Church, the citizens first furiously drove away the Jesuits; and then, with true popular consistency, as furiously drove away the Vicar-General and his clergy. The intrusive order triumphed, and established themselves at Saragossa, both as ministers of religion, and as teachers of youth. It was a triumph doomed to a late, but lamentable expiation.

In France, Ignatius contended long and without success for the reception and settlement of his society. Though the Cardinal of Lorraine was his advocate, and Henry II. issued letters patent, authorising the establishment of a Jesuit house and college in Paris, the Parliament refused to register the grant; and, when urged by the royal commands to obedience, opposed to them an angry remonstrance. The University seconded the Parliament. The Sorbonne promulgated a "conclusion" in their support. The Archbishop poured down a pitiless storm of declarations, prohibitions, and censures upon the heads of the suspected and unpopular Jesuits. Neither the King, the Cardinal, nor the General could make head against the thick flight of these ecclesiastical missiles. So the churchmen and the professors of Paris retained their monopoly of preaching and lecturing; the Jesuits taking refuge at St. Germain, where, beyond the reach of the metropolitan jurisdiction, they waited the arrival of more propitious days.

In Portugal still more formidable disasters exercised the fortitude of Ignatius. Under the genial beams of royal favour, his institution had thriven but too luxuriantly in that kingdom, and was already exhibiting symptoms of corruption and decay. The Jesuit College at Coimbra was crowded with youths of family and fortune, who had rapidly degenerated into the lawless and self-indulgent habits of secular collegians. Rodriguez, the provincial of Portugal, a ruler of a gentle nature and too easy compliance, had been unable to restrain their petulance, or to punish their vices; and was dis-

placed by the indignant General to make way for Miron, a man renowned for austerity, and endowed with an inflexible sternness. But the severities of Miron were followed by an open revolt of the students; and so formidable was their resistance, that even Ignatius was compelled to temporise. It was not, however, in his nature to make a permanent sacrifice of any part of his authority. He subjugated the rebels at length; but it was by a method which, at any other time, and in any other hands, might pass for the fabulous.

The rector of the college of Coimbra magnanimously resolved to make a public and painful expiation in his own person for the offences of his pupils. With his back and shoulders bare, and wielding in his hand a scourge, he traversed the city, inflicting on his naked back a succession of well-aimed and formidable stripes, and explaining to the astonished multitude the vicarious nature of this self-inflicted punishment. The example was of course irresistible. Other Jesuits quickly followed the rector, lashing themselves with emulous severity. The fascination spread. The refractory students themselves at length joined the expiatory procession, till they reached the college; where they arrived soundly whipped, excoriated, bleeding, and exhausted; and resolved never more to provoke the mysterious power with which they had to do—a power which could thus, by an incomprehensible influence, compel their own wills to pronounce, and their own arms to execute, a sentence of shame and suffering, such as no other judge would have ventured to impose.

The great enchanter himself was now, however, to submit to the common doom. The spiritual sovereignty of which he was the architect had, in less than a quarter of a century, acquired an extension almost as great, and an establishment almost as firm, as that which the papacy had gained by the unremitting labours of a thousand years. But, on the 30th of July, 1556, the strong man received the summons to render up his soul to him who gave it. He lingered till the following day and then died; but, strange to say, “unanointed, unannealed,” without the benediction of the Pope, or the sacraments of his Church. It is alleged by his friends that, in the spirit of obedience to his physician, he had postponed till too late the demand for these spiritual aids. His enemies exult over him as having betrayed, by this last act of indifference to the offices of religion, the latent infidelity and the secret falsehood of his life. The more charitable is incomparably the more probable hypothesis. They, however, who have studied Christianity in the life and the discourses of its divine Author, rather than in systems of dogmatic theology, will venture to believe that the acceptance of a dying man



by his Maker depends on something infinitely higher and more holy than any priestly absolution, or sacerdotal chrism.

Some unconscious love of power, a mind bewildered by many gross superstitions and many theoretical errors, and perhaps some tinge of insanity, may be justly ascribed to Ignatius Loyola. But no dispassionate student of his life will question his integrity, or deny him the praise of a devotion at once sincere, habitual, and profound. It is not to the glory of the Reformed to depreciate their greatest antagonist; or to think meanly of him, by whom, more than by any other man, the Reformation was stayed, and the Church of Rome rescued from her impending doom.

In the language now current amongst us, Ignatius might be described as the leader of the conservative, against the innovating spirit of his times. It was an age, as indeed is every era of great popular revolutions, when the impulsive or centrifugal forces which tend to isolate man, preponderating over the attractive or centripetal forces which tend to congregate him, had destroyed the balance of the social system. From amidst the controversies which then agitated the world had emerged two great truths, of which, after three hundred years' debate, we are yet to find the reconciliation. It was true that the Christian Commonwealth ought to be one consentient body, united under one supreme head and bound together by a community of law, of doctrine, and of worship. It was also true that each member of that body was obliged for himself, on his own responsibility, and at his own peril, to render that worship, to ascertain that doctrine, to study that law, and to seek the guidance of that Supreme Ruler. Between these corporate duties and these individual obligations, there was a seeming contrariety. And yet the contradiction must be apparent only, and not real; for all truths must be consistent with each other. Here was a problem for the learned and the wise, for schools, and presses, and pulpits. But it is not by sages, nor in the spirit of philosophy, that such problems receive their practical solution. Wisdom may be the ultimate arbiter, but is seldom the immediate agent in human affairs. It is by antagonist passions, prejudices, and follies, that the equipoise of this most belligerent planet of ours is chiefly preserved in our own days; and so it was in the sixteenth century. If Papal Rome had her Brennus, she must also have her Camillus. From the camp of the invaders arose the war-cry of absolute mental independence; from the beleaguered host, the watch-word of absolute spiritual obedience. The German pointed the way to that sacred solitude where, besides the worshipper himself, none may enter; the Spaniard to that innumerable company, which, with one accord, still chant the liturgies, and recite the creeds, of remotest generations. Chieftains in

the most momentous warfare of which this earth had been the theatre since the subversion of Paganism, each was a rival worthy of the other in capacity, courage, disinterestedness, and the love of truth. And yet how marvellous the contrast!

Luther took to wife a nun. For thirty years together, Loyola never once looked on the female countenance. To overthrow the houses of the order to which he belonged, was the triumph of the reformer. To establish a new order on indestructible foundations, the glory of the saint. The career of the one was opened in the cell, and concluded amidst the cares of secular government. The course of life of the other, led him from a youth of camps and palaces to an old age of religious abstraction. Demons haunted both; but to the northern visionary they appeared as foul or malignant fiends, with whom he was to agonise in spiritual strife; to the southern dreamer, as angels of light marshalling his way to celestial blessedness. As best became his Teutonic honesty and singleness of heart, Luther aimed at no *perfection* but such as may consist with the everyday cares, and the common duties, and the innocent delights of our social existence; at once the foremost of heroes, and a very man; now oppressed with melancholy, and defying the powers of darkness, satanic or human; then "rejoicing in gladness and thankfulness of heart for all his abundance;" loving and beloved; communing with the wife of his bosom; prattling with his children; surrendering his overburdened mind to the charms of music; awake to every gentle voice, and to each cheerful aspect of nature or of art; responding alike to every divine impulse and to every human feeling; no chord unstrung in his spiritual or sensitive frame, but all blending together in harmonies as copious as the bounties of Providence, and as changeful as the vicissitudes of life. How remote from the "perfection" which Loyola proposed to himself, and which (unless we presume to distrust the Bulls by which he was beatified and canonised) we must suppose him to have attained! Drawn by infallible, not less distinctly than by fallible limners, the portrait of the military priest of the Casa Professa possesses the cold dignity and the grace of sculpture; but is wholly wanting in the mellow tones, the lights and shadows, the rich colouring, and the skilful composition of the sister art. There he stands apart from us mortal men, familiar with visions which he may not communicate, and with joys which he cannot impart. Severe in the midst of raptures, composed in the very agonies of pain; a silent, austere, and solitary man; with a heart formed for tenderness, yet mortifying even his best affections; loving mankind as his brethren, and yet rejecting their sympathy: one while, a squalid care-worn self-lacerated pauper,

tormenting his own senses that so he might rescue others from sensuality; at another a monarch reigning in secluded majesty, that so he might become the benefactor of his race; and then a legislator exacting, though with no selfish purposes, an obedience as submissive and as prompt as is due to the King of kings.

Heart and soul we are for the Protestant. He who will be wiser than his Maker is but seeming wise. He who will deaden one half of his nature to invigorate the other half will become at best a distorted prodigy. Dark as are the pages, and indistinct as is the character in which the truth is inscribed, he who can decipher the roll will there read — that self-adoring pride is the head-spring of stoicism, whether in the heathen or in the Christian world. But there is a roll, neither dark nor ambiguous, in which the simplest and most ignorant may learn in what the “perfection” of our humanity really consists. Throughout the glorious profusion of didactic precepts, of pregnant apothegms, of lyric and choral songs, of institutes ecclesiastical and civil, of historical legends and biographies, of homilies and apologies, of prophetic menaces, of epistolary admonitions, and of positive laws, which crowd the inspired Canon, there is still one consentient voice proclaiming to man, that the world within and the world without him were created for each other; that his interior life must be sustained and nourished by intercourse with external things; and that he then most nearly approaches to the “perfection” of his nature, when, being most conversant with the joys and sorrows of life, and most affected by them, he is yet the best prepared to renounce the one or to endure the other, in a cheerful acquiescence in the will of Heaven.

Unalluring, and on the whole unlovely as it is, the image of Loyola must ever command the homage of the world. No other uninspired man, unaided by military or civil power, and making no appeal to the passions of the multitude, has had the genius to conceive, the courage to attempt, and the success to establish, a polity teeming with results at once so momentous and so distinctly anticipated. Amidst his ascetic follies, and his half crazy visions, and despite all the coarse daubing with which the miracle-mongers of his Church have defaced it, his character is destitute neither of sublimity nor of grace. They were men of no common stamp with whom he lived, and they regarded him with an unbounded reverence. On the anniversary of his death Baronius and Bellarmine met to worship at his tomb; and there, with touching and unpremeditated eloquence, joined to celebrate his virtues. His successor Laynez was so well convinced that Loyola was beloved by the Deity above all other men, as to declare it impossible that any request of his should be refused. Xavier was wont to kneel

when he wrote letters to him, to implore the Divine aid through the merits of his "holy Father Ignatius," and to carry about his autograph as a sacred relic. In popular estimation, the very house in which he once dwelt had been so hallowed by his presence, as to shake to the foundation, if thoughts unbecoming its purity found entrance into the mind of any inmate. Of his theopathy, as exhibited in his letters, in his recorded discourse, and in the precepts of his "Spiritual Exercises," it is perhaps difficult for the colder imaginations, and the Protestant reserve, of the North to form a correct estimate. Measured by such a standard, it must be pronounced irreverent and erotic ;—a libation on the altar at once too profuse and too little filtered from the dross of human passion. But to his fellow-men he was not merely benevolent, but compassionate, tolerant, and candid. However inflexible in exacting from his chosen followers an all-enduring constancy, he was gentle to others, especially to the young and the weak ; and would often make an amiable though awkward effort to promote their recreation. He was never heard to mention a fault or a crime, except to suggest an apology for the offender. "Humbly to conceal humility, and to shun the praise of being humble," was the maxim and the habit of his later life ; and on that principle he maintained the unostentatious decencies of his rank as General of his order at the Casa Professa ; a convent which had been assigned for their residence at Rome. There he dwelt, conducting a correspondence more extensive and important than any which issued from the cabinets of Paris or Madrid. In sixteen years he had established twelve Jesuit Provinces in Europe, India, Africa, and Brazil ; and more than a hundred colleges or houses for the professed and the probationers, already amounting to many thousands. His missionaries had traversed every country, however remote and barbarous, which the enterprise of his age had opened to the merchants of Europe. The devout resorted to him for guidance, the miserable for relief, the wise for instruction, and the rulers of the earth for succour. Men felt that there had appeared among them one of those monarchs who reign in right of their own native supremacy ; and to whom the feebler wills of others must yield either a ready or a reluctant allegiance. It was a conviction recorded by his disciples on his tomb, in these memorable and significant words : "Whoever thou mayest be who has portrayed to thine own imagination Pompey, or Cæsar, or Alexander, open thine eyes to the truth, and let this marble teach thee how much greater a conqueror than they was Ignatius."

Whatever may have been the comparative majesty of the Cæsarian and the Ignatian conquests, it was true of either that, on the



death of the conqueror, the succession to his diadem hung long in anxious suspense. Our tale descends from the sublime and the heroic to the region of ordinary motives and of ordinary men.

When Ignatius died, two of the most eminent of the original members of his order, Bobadilla and Laynez, were labouring under diseases supposed to be mortal. Laynez roused himself to issue a summons, requiring the attendance of the professed members at Rome, to make choice of a General. But Philip II., then at war with the papal court, rendered the election impossible, by detaining a majority of the Electoral College in Spain. Laynez, therefore, undertook the government of the society, with the rank and title of Vicar-General.

There are some bodily disorders for which promotion is a specific. Full of renovated life, the Vicar-General assumed all the powers of his great predecessor, and soon gave proof that they had fallen into no feeble hands. But neither was that a feeble grasp in which the keys of Peter were then held. Hot-headed and imperious as he was, Paul IV. had quailed in the solemn presence of Ignatius; but he believed that the time had now come for arresting the progress of a power which he had learnt rather to dread as the rival, than to respect as the guardian, of his own. To the succour of the Pope came Bobadilla; who also shook off his illness that he might assume the guidance of a party among the professed Jesuits who were opposed to the advancement of Laynez to the office of General.

They commenced hostilities by preferring against him the charge of meditating an escape to Spain, with the view of conducting the election there, and of fixing the future seat and centre of the Jesuit power within the dominions of Philip; where, exempt from papal control, they might give to the order whatever character and constitutions might best promote the greatness, and gratify the ambition, of the General. To defeat this project the Pope issued a mandate forbidding any Jesuit to quit the precincts of the city. Encouraged by this success, Bobadilla, a warm-hearted, impetuous man, who, even during the life of Ignatius, had protested against the severity of his rules and his demand of implicit obedience, now poured forth a series of vehement remonstrances against the supposed machinations of the Vicar-General. With a far more profound policy Laynez entrenched himself within an elaborate display of penitence, meekness, and humility. He confessed that it became him and his followers to atone, by self-inflicted penances, for the offence which it had seemed good to the Holy Father to impute to them. He was himself the first to lay publicly on his own shoulders severe and frequent stripes to expiate this fault.

His meekness was such that he declined to return any answer to the harsh accusations of his antagonists. The laws of their order, indeed, required that the Vicar-General should impose *some* punishment on a subordinate who had advanced a complaint against his superior; but so admirable was his mildness, that he subjected the bitterest of his assailants to no greater burthen than a single recital of the Paternoster and the Ave Maria.

Bobadilla and his adherents were no match for subtlety like this. They forgot of what inestimable price such exquisite lowliness must be in papal eyes. They overlooked the disfavour with which any resistance to any spiritual authority must always be regarded at the Vatican. They had the indiscretion to represent to the irritable pontiff that by punishing an appeal to himself by the infliction of any penance whatever, Laynez had violated the Majesty of the Papal Crown, and infringed the privileges of all Christian people. "What, then, was the penance?" inquired the Cardinal Minister. "One Paternoster and one Ave Maria," was the reply. Indignation, contempt, and a pious horror at the feebleness of soul which could murmur under such a trifle, repelled the unfortunate remonstrants from the presence of Paul. Laynez enjoyed the pleasure of having made them ridiculous. His gratification was not long afterwards completed by their exile to Assisi, there to perform far less tolerable exercises of penitence. They left the world of Rome for him to bustle in.

Peace with Spain returned; and with it came the electors so long and anxiously expected. The entire chapter did not include more than twenty members. It was a lowly chamber in which they were convened, nor did a company less imposing in outward semblance meet together on that day within the compass of the seven hills. Yet scarcely had the Comitia, to whose shouts those hills had once re-echoed, ever conferred on consul or on prætor a power more real or more extensive than that which those homely men had now assembled to bestow. But before their choice of a General had been made, the doors of the conclave were thrown open, and Cardinal Pacheco appeared among them in the name of the Pope, and armed with his delegated authority. He had come (he said) not to control their proceedings, nor to restrain the free exercise of their electoral powers; but merely to assert, by his presence, the high prerogative of his Holiness as the sovereign protector of the order. The votes were then collected. Laynez was announced as the new General of the Society; and homilies, adorations, and thanksgivings celebrated his accession to office.

In the midst of this devotional harmony the voice of Pacheco was again heard. In the name of Paul he insisted, that, like other

religious men, the Jesuits should thenceforward perform all the daily offices, choral and liturgical, of public worship. Ere the panic of this unwelcome mandate had subsided, the cardinal announced the further pleasure of the sovereign protector, that the tenure of the office of General should cease, not with his life, but at the end of some brief term, not exceeding three years. Each of these decisions was fatal to the great designs of Ignatius and his successor. The first would reduce their Society from their high calling, as champions of the Church, to the low level of any other order of monks. The second, by impairing all the energy of their monarchical constitution, would render them the mere vassals of the Pope, and subjugate them effectually to the papal power. To shake off these mandates, Laynez expostulated, reasoned, prayed. He was the most eloquent speaker of his times, but for once he spoke in vain. The immovable pontiff persisted, and actually inscribed on the constitutions of Ignatius two decrees for giving effect to these innovations. In a few months afterwards Paul IV. died; when, despite these solemn commands and their own still more solemn oaths of obedience, Laynez and his successors remained Generals for life; and neither chant nor anthem, psalm or liturgy, were ever afterwards permitted to prolong the sacred offices of the Order of Jesus. What are the limits which are implied in every vow of unlimited submission? When our own high churchmen were labouring a century and a half ago for the answer to that knotty question, they were perhaps unconscious that it had already vexed the ingenuity of Iago Laynez and his associates, without in any degree impeding their freedom.

The elevation of Laynez to the vacant throne of Ignatius, was not accomplished without some sinister arts and some secular policy; but there is no reason to doubt that, in achieving that ascent, he was also guided by purer and more noble motives. In him, as in other men, antagonist principles not seldom enjoyed a divided triumph, and the testimonies to his virtues are such and so numerous as to command assent to their general truth. Eight of the twenty-four books of the history of Orlandinus are devoted to his administration of the affairs of the Jesuits. The reader of them willingly acknowledges that he possessed extraordinary abilities: and, half reluctantly, admits that he was scarcely less distinguished by genuine piety.

Laynez would seem to have been born to supply the intellectual deficiencies of Ignatius. He was familiar with the Greek and Latin tongues, with the whole compass of theological literature, and with all the moral sciences which in his age a theologian was required to cultivate. With these stores of knowledge he had

made himself necessary to the founder of his order. Loyola consulted, employed, and trusted, but apparently did not like him. It is stated by Orlandinus that there was no other of his eminent followers whom the great patriarch of the society treated with such habitual rigour, while yet there was none who rendered him such important services.

The rigour with which Laynez was treated is well illustrated by his appointment to be Provincial of Italy, and to reside at Padua. As often as he had trained up in that city any promising recruit, the General withdrew the novice to Rome. Laynez complained of being thus deprived of the use of the instruments fashioned by himself. Ignatius answered, that it was right to congregate all the most effective sons of the society at Rome, because there was the seat and centre of their operations. Again Laynez remonstrated; and then Ignatius called on him to state what he thought the penance due to him for such contumacious importunity. The Provincial answered this stern question, as he says, with tears in his eyes. He proposed that he should be withdrawn from all share in the government of the Order; that he should be deprived of all books, except his breviary; that he should beg his way to Rome; that there he should be employed in the most menial offices of the Casa Professa; or, if found unfit for them, in teaching grammar to little children; that, after passing through this penance for two or three years, he should undergo various scourgings, and a fast of four weeks' continuance; to all which most contrite suggestions, he added a promise that whenever again he should have occasion to write to his good father, he would abound in circumspection and in prayer.

This extraordinary course of penitential discipline was obviously recommended by Laynez only as a mode of expressing the profound reverence due to his General, and not with any real expectation that he would accept the proposal. Ignatius substituted for it a much wiser penance, by requiring Laynez to compose a theological work in refutation of the heretics. The General had looked deeply into the soul of his lieutenant. He saw that his too active and restless spirit was the real cause of his discontent at Padua, and judiciously prescribed the sedative of the desk.

The services rendered by Laynez to his superior, are not less remarkable than the severity with which they were thus occasionally required. "Do you not think," said Ignatius to him, "that the founders of the religious orders were inspired when they framed their constitutions?" "I do," was the answer, "so far as the general scheme and outline were concerned." Guided by this



opinion, Loyola established a remarkable division of labour between himself and his follower. He, in the character of an inspired saint, took for his province the composing the text of the constitutions. To Laynez, as an uninspired scholar, he assigned the preparation of an authoritative comment. For himself, the lawgiver claimed the praise of having erected an edifice of which the plan and the arrangement were divine. To his fellow-labourer, he assigned the merit of having supported it by the solid foundation of a learning which, however excellent, was yet entirely human. An example will best explain the nature of this joint operation.

“In Theologiâ legetur vetus et novum Testamentum, et Doctrina Scholastica Divi Thomæ” — is the text. “Prælegetur etiam Magister Sententiarum, sed si videatur temporis decursu alius autor studentibus utilior futurus, ut si aliqua summa vel liber Theologiæ scholasticæ conficeretur qui nostris temporibus accommodatior videretur, prælegi poterit” — is the comment. Ignatius was content that the divine Thomas should be installed among the Jesuits as the permanent interpreter of the sacred oracles. Laynez, with deeper foresight, perceived that the day was coming when they must discover a teacher “better suited to our times.” It was a prediction which, shortly after his death, was fulfilled in the person of Molina, his own pupil.

To Laynez belongs the praise or the reproach of having revived, in modern times, the doctrine known in the Catholic Church as Molinist, in the Protestant Churches as Arminian. Our latest posterity will debate, as our remotest ancestry have debated, the truth of that doctrine. But that it was “temporibus accommodatior,” no one will deny. The times evidently required that the great antagonists of the Reformation should inculcate a belief more comprehensive and more flexible than that of Augustin or of Thomas. Much of the danger and disrepute to which the society was afterwards exposed, may, perhaps, be traced to those opinions. But much of the secret of their vitality and their strength, must also be ascribed to the same cause.

Aided by these theological accomplishments, Laynez rendered to his General at the Council of Trent services still more important than those which he had performed as a commentator on the Ignatian constitutions. He was selected, with Salmeron for his associate, to represent the papacy at that synod, so far as respected the exposition and defence of the doctrines of the see of Rome. Orlandinus has preserved the instructions addressed to these delegates by Loyola on the eve of their departure. They were to be deliberate in speaking, attentive in listening, and vigilant in seizing on the exact meaning of other speakers. They were

admonished to avoid every appearance of dogmatism or prejudice, lest they should offend those whom it was their business to conciliate. In order to maintain their own serenity, they were to keep their seats when they spoke. They were to make frequent and regular visits to the hospitals, but not without alms to the patients; and in addressing them, they were to converse copiously, and with affection, laying aside the terse and circumspect style befitting their addresses to the council. They were to meet every morning to discuss the business of the day, in the course of which absolute unanimity amongst themselves would be indispensable; and twice on each day they were carefully to examine their own consciences.

Layneze and Salmeron appear to have conformed exactly to these wise admonitions. In the midst of the gorgeous assembly of princes, prelates, and ambassadors, they at first appeared in ostentatious meanness of apparel. They then, however, submitted to wear the better clothing presented to them by a much scandalised cardinal, that they might manifest a no less ostentatious indifference to the use or the neglect of so mean an external advantage. They had joined the synod with purposes too magnificent and daring to leave their minds vacant for even a passing thought on matters so insignificant as these. For in the bosom of that most orthodox congregation, Layneze dared the reproach of heresy, and proclaimed opinions which, since the days of Augustin had been branded as Pelagian.

Since the fall of the Roman Commonwealth the world had produced no such theatre for the exhibition of oratorical powers. Layneze is supposed not to have been constitutionally brave, but in the cathedral of Trent he bore himself with all the hardihood which unrivalled superiority in debate will impart to the least courageous. He asserted the freedom of the human will amidst outcries of indignation. He maintained the doctrines which, north of the Alps, are called ultramontane, although they were most unwelcome to the vast majority of his auditors. He vehemently opposed the admission of the laity to the cup, although it was the popular demand of more than half of Europe. He was strong in the consciousness of his dominion over those feelings to which a great speaker in a numerous assembly seldom appeals in vain. The very position from which he spoke proclaimed the pride, which becomes impressive only by assuming the disguise of humility. It was the place the most remote from the thrones of the papal legates, and the elevated chairs of the ambassadors of Christendom. But when he spoke those thrones and chairs were abandoned. Cardinals, bishops, counts, and abbots quitted their seats and

thronged around him. Generals and doctors obeyed the same impulse; and, on one occasion, a circle more illustrious for rank and learning than had ever before surrounded the tribune of an orator, continued, during two successive hours, to reward his efforts by their profound and silent admiration.

On examining the only two of the speeches of Laynez which have been preserved by Orlandinus, it is difficult to detect the charm which thus seduced the haughtiest prelates into a passing forgetfulness of their dignity. His eloquence would appear to have been neither impassioned nor imaginative, nor of that intense earnestness which seems to despise the very rules by the observance of which it triumphs. Luminous argumentation, clothed in transparent language, and delivered with facility and grace, was probably the praise to which he was entitled — no vulgar praise indeed, for amidst the triumphs of oratory few are greater or more welcome than that of infusing order without fatigue into the chaotic thoughts of an inquisitive audience.

The health of Laynez sank beneath these efforts; and, if Orlandinus may be believed, the deliberations of the fathers of Trent were suspended until he was able to resume his place among them. The fact seems very questionable; but if Laynez received this high honour he was not long permitted to enjoy it. The march of the Protestants on Trent dispersed the council, and enabled him to exhibit his eloquence in a different, and scarcely less memorable assembly.

Catherine de Medici had issued, in her son's name, citations to the leaders of the two religions to meet for their celebrated conference at Poissy, and Laynez was despatched to France to protest, in the name of the sovereign pontiff, against this assumption by a temporal prince of the right to convene a synod for the adjustment of spiritual questions. Nevertheless, Catherine and her son, and the princes of his blood, appeared on the appointed day at Poissy. Thither also came a long array of cardinals, of bishops, and of doctors. Theodore Beza and Peter Martyr were there, with ten other reformed ministers; and there also appeared Laynez, armed *cap-à-pie* as a polemic, and clothed with all the dignities of a representative of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic See.

Among the memorable incidents of the debate which followed, was the bold apostrophe of Laynez to Catherine. He bade her remember that neither she nor any other secular monarch had any right to enter into compacts or negotiations with the enemies of the Church. "The smith," he exclaimed, "to his smithery. To the priesthood, and to them alone, are reserved all such questions

as these." Catherine is said to have wept on receiving this public rebuke. If so, her tears were as unimpressive as those of Mary on the heart of Knox. "Catherine is an old acquaintance of mine," said Laynez afterwards to the Prince de Condé; "she is an admirable actress, but will not deceive me."

In Beza he encountered an opponent more worthy of his powers. It had been alleged, in disproof of the real presence, that the image of anything was misplaced when the reality itself was there. Laynez answered that the type and anti-type might occasionally meet together; as, for example, if, on the anniversary of a victory, the conqueror should exhibit the various military evolutions by which he had won the battle. With more smartness than reverence Beza rejoined, that the answer reduced the mass to a comedy, and made a comedian of Him whose presence there was asserted.

Much else, as little worthy of remembrance, passed between these learned combatants. Had Samuel Taylor Coleridge been present, how would he have deplored their unconsciousness of the great distinction between the reason and the understanding! How eloquently would he have reminded them, that if men will join in the war of words without the same common intuitions, they may discharge their dialectics against each other till the day of doom without making any approach to the same common conclusions.

From Poissy Laynez retired to Trent. He resumed his seat in the council in the double character of Legate of the Pope and General of the Order of Jesus. These dignities seem to have a little impaired his former skill in the management of a popular assembly. Forgetting that the triumphs of pride are best won in the garb of lowliness, he engaged in an ill-timed and unsuccessful contest with the Generals of the monastic orders for precedence. But his defeat was solaced, not only by a high station on the episcopal bench, but by having appropriated to his use an elevated desk or pulpit, from which he might address the synod without danger that any member of it would be deprived of the delight of hearing him.

Laynez appears to have amply rewarded this homage. He was foremost in every debate, and the historians of the council ascribe to his eloquence two of the most remarkable decrees of the two last sessions. One of those decisions has very lately been invoked in the House of Commons as among the highest extant authorities in favour of the recent enactment, by which marriages not celebrated *in facie ecclesie* have been rendered as valid as though solemnised by a priest in holy orders. The council indeed determined that for the future the intervention of such a



priest should be indispensable ; but they prefaced this enactment by declaring that the former law of the Christian world had been otherwise, and that, until then, no ecclesiastical observances whatever had been necessary to render a matrimonial contract binding on the spouses, and sufficient for the legitimacy of their offspring.

To the eloquence of Laynez is to be ascribed this recognition of the general principle. With equal force and intrepidity he maintained that marriage is a right conferred upon mankind by the immediate gift of God himself—that no human authority is entitled to derogate from it even to the slightest extent—that therefore the Church herself could not lawfully restrain the use of this heaven-born franchise by any burthensome formality—and that to render sacerdotal interference indispensable to the exercise of it would be a mere usurpation and a lawless abuse of power. If the speaker had foreseen that at the distance of three centuries an heretical parliament would build on the foundation he was thus laying, or if that parliament had been aware that the foundations on which they built had been laid by a General of the Jesuits, which of the two would have been the more scandalised ?

In the twenty-fifth and last session Laynez rendered an important service to his society, though with more credit to his address than to his candour. To abate the offence given to the world by the abuse of monastic vows of poverty, the council had decreed that the mendicant orders might hold temporal possessions in their corporate capacities. Two of the more zealous of those fraternities sued for and obtained the privilege of exclusion from this invidious franchise. Not to be eclipsed in pious ardour by any religious community, Laynez also solicited and obtained the boon that the Jesuits should continue to be bound by their self-denying renunciation of all worldly wealth. But (says Father Paul) with the return of day other thoughts returned ; and, on the morrow, Laynez persuaded the council to reverse their sentence, so as to leave to his society the privilege of holding estates as a body corporate. “To possess the right and yet never to use it, would,” he argued, “be praiseworthy in the sight of God. To be deprived of that right on their own petition, would, on the other hand, be praiseworthy in the sight of man. But how much better was it that they should enjoy the honour which cometh of God, than that honour which cometh of man only ?” Is it wonderful that the words Jesuitical, and double-minded, so soon became synonymous ?

The council was at length dissolved. Laynez returned to Rome, ruined in health, but possessing the highest esteem and gratitude of Pius IV., who then filled the papal throne. As an eminent

expression of his favour, the Pope made a solemn visit to the General and the College of Jesuits, where he was received with discharges of compliments, literary, scientific, and philosophical, with which the reception of Elizabeth and James at our own universities will not bear a moment's comparison. For Laynez excelled most men not only in learning, but in the power of giving an impulse to the studies of the learned. Under his government the colleges and scholars of the Order had increased fourfold, and her associated members in a still greater proportion.

Layneze knew how to rule as well as how to teach. By firmness or by craft, he at once and for ever crushed the revolt of Bobadilla and his followers. By his energy he at once animated and controlled the operations of all the ministers of his power. He swayed it to the last, unaided by any colleague, and unawed by any rival; and even on his dying bed refused to name a vicar, or accept a coadjutor. He died in the year 1565, and in the fifty-second year of his age. His death was soothed with all the consolations of the last sacraments of his Church, and of a plenary indulgence from the Pope; and perhaps was not without the solace of remembering that his life had been ceaselessly devoted to the duties prescribed by the laws of his society, and by the law of his own conscience.

Was that conscience itself a blind guide, perverted by low affections, and by unhallowed impulses? Who shall presume to answer? All hail to Rhadamanthus on his posthumous judgment-seat in the nether regions! But when Rhadamanthus comes above-ground, holds in his hand the historical pen, and resolves all the enigmas of hearts which ceased to beat long centuries ago, more confidently than most of us would dare to interpret the mysteries of our own, one wishes him back again at the confluence of Styx, Phlegethon, and Cocytus. It is, after all, nothing more than the surface of human character which the retrospective scrutiny of the keenest human eye is able to detect.

Ambition clothed in rags — subtlety under the guise of candour — timidity beneath the mask of audacious eloquence — these are the offences laid to the charge of Iago Laynez. Yet a priest who, in the sixteenth century, refused the purple, must have had aspirations for something higher than worldly honours. Hypocrisy is the charge which every one must bear who has to do with enemies incredulous of all virtue superior to their own. And cowardice is a reproach never to be escaped by him who, being debarred from the use of all weapons but the tongue, knows how to render that weapon terrible to his opponents. The historical portraiture which exhibits Laynez as ambitious, crafty, and timid, may be a

correct likeness; but no one who considers how confused are the lights by which we must now examine it, will peremptorily declare that the resemblance is accurate.

Gifted with extraordinary talents, flexible address, profound learning, and captivating eloquence, Laynez fell short of that standard at which alone the name of any man may be inscribed on the roll sacred to those who have reigned over their fellow-mortals by a right divine, inherent, and indefeasible. Without the genius to devise, or the glowing passion to achieve great things, none may take his place with those kings of the earth on whose brows Nature herself has set the diadem. Far surpassing, in mere intellectual resources, both Ignatius and Xavier, the fiery element native to their souls was uninhabitable by his. But though his hands could not grasp their weapons, he wielded his own with admirable skill and efficacy. To Laynez his society were first indebted for their characteristic theology, for the possession and the fame of learning, for a more intimate alliance with the papacy, and for the more pronounced hostility of the Reformers. He first established for them that authority in the cabinets of Europe, on which, at no distant time, the edifice of their temporal power was to rest. It was his melancholy distinction to number among these royal disciples the infamous Catherine, and her less odious, because feebler son. He was associated with them at the time when they were revolving the greatest crime with which the annals of Christendom have been polluted. His memory is, however, unstained with the guilt of that massacre, except so far as the doctrines he inculcated in the conference at Poissy may have induced the sovereigns to think lightly of any bloodshed which should rid the world of a party which he taught them to regard as abhorred of God, and as hateful to the enlightened eye of man.

It is more easy to discern the intellectual than the moral greatness of Laynez. He was the earliest, if not the most eminent example of the natural results of Loyola's discipline. His character illustrates the effect of concentrating all the interests of life, and all the affections of the heart, within the narrow circle of one contracted fellowship. It yielded in him as it has produced in others, a vigorous, but a stunted development of the moral faculties — a kind of social selfishness and sectional virtue — a subordination of philanthropy to the love of caste — a spirit irreclaimably servile, because exulting in its own servitude — a temper consistent indeed with great actions, and often contributing to them, but destructive (at least in ordinary minds) of that free and cordial sympathy with man as man, of those careless graces and of that majestic repose, which touch and captivate the heart in Him whose

name the Order of the Jesuits had assumed, and to which must in part, at least, be ascribed the sacred fascination exercised over us all by the simple records of his life and language.

On the 2nd of July, 1565, the Cassa Professa, usually the scene of a profound stillness, was agitated by an unwonted excitement. Men of austere demeanour might be seen there clasping each other's hands, and voices habitually mute were interchanging hearty congratulations. One alone appeared to take no share in the common joy. As if overpowered by some strange and unwelcome tidings, he seemed by imploring gestures to deprecate a decision against which his paralysed lips in vain attempted to protest. His age might be nearly sixty, his dress mean and sordid, and toil or suffering had ploughed their furrows in his pallid cheek; but he balanced his tall and still graceful figure with a soldier's freedom, and gazed on his associates with a countenance cast in that mould which ladies love and artists emulate. They called him Father Francis; and, on the death of Laynez, their almost unanimous suffrage had just hailed him as the third General of the Order of Jesus. The wish for rank and power was never more sincerely disclaimed; for never had they been forced on any one who had a larger experience of their vanity.

In the female line Father Francis was the grandson of Ferdinand of Arragon, and therefore the near kinsman of the Emperor Charles V. Among his paternal ancestry he could boast or lament the names of Alexander VI. and of Cæsar Borgia. Of that house, eminent alike for their wealth, their honours, and their crimes, he was the lineal representative; and had, in early manhood, inherited from his father the patrimony and the title of the Dukes of Gandia.

Don Francis Borgia, as if to rescue the name he bore from the infamy of his progenitors, exhaled, even in his childish days, the odour of sanctity. With each returning month, he cast a lot to determine which he should personate of the saints with whose names it was studded on the calendar. In his tenth year, with a virtue unsung and unconceived by the *Musæ Etonenses*, he played at saints so perfectly as to inflict a vigorous chastisement on his own naked person. It is hard to resist the wish that the scourge had been yet more resolutely wielded by the arm of his tutor. So seems to have thought his maternal uncle, Don John of Arragon, Archbishop of Saragossa. Taking the charge of his nephew, that high-born prelate compelled him to study alternately the lessons of the riding-master and those of the master of the sentences; and in his nineteenth year sent him to complete his education at the court of his imperial cousin.



Ardent as were still the aspirations of the young courtier for the monastic life, no one in that gallant circle bore himself more bravely in the *ménage*, or sheathed his sword with a steadier hand in the throat of the half-maddened bull, or more skilfully disputed with his sovereign the honours of the tournament. As the youthful knight, bowing to the saddle-tree, lowered his spear before the "Queen of Beauty," many a full dark eye beamed with a deeper lustre; but his triumph was incomplete and worthless unless it won the approving smile of Eleonora de Castro. That smile was not often refused. But the romance of Don Francis begins where other romances terminate. Foremost in the train of Charles and Isabella, the husband of the fair Eleonora still touched his lute with unrivalled skill in the halls of the Escorial, or followed the quarry across the plains of Castile in advance of the most ardent falconer. Yet that music was universally selected from the offices of the Church; and in the very agony of the chase, just as the wheeling hawk paused for his last deadly plunge, (genius of Nimrod, listen!) he would avert his eyes and ride slowly home, the inventor of a matchless effort of penitential self-denial.

With Charles himself for his fellow-pupil, Don Francis studied the arts of war and fortification under the once celebrated Sainte Croix, and practised in Africa the lessons he had been taught;—earning the double praise, that in the camp he was the most magnificent, in the field the most adventurous, of all the leaders in that vaunted expedition. At the head of a troop enlisted and maintained by himself, he attended the emperor to the Milanese and Provence; and, in honourable acknowledgment of his services, was selected by Charles to lay a report of the campaign before the empress in person, at Segovia. Towards her he felt an almost filial regard. She had long been the zealous patron and the cordial friend of himself and of Eleonora; and at the public festivals, which celebrated at once the victories of Charles and the meeting of the States of Castile at Toledo, they shone among the most brilliant of the satellites by which her throne was encircled.

At the moment of triumph the inexorable arm was unbarred which so often, as in mockery of human pomp, confounds together the world's bravest pageants and the humiliations of the grave. Dust to dust and ashes to ashes! but, when the imperial fall, not without one last poor assertion of their departed dignity. Isabella might not be laid in the sepulchre of the Kings of Spain until, amidst the funeral rites, the soldered coffin had been opened, the cerements removed, and some grandee of the highest rank had been enabled to depose that he had seen within them the very body of the deceased sovereign. Such, in pursuance of an ancient

custom, was the duty confided to the zeal of Don Francis Borgia; nor was any one better fitted for such a trust. The eye, now for ever closed, had never turned to him but with maternal kindness, and every lineament of that serene and once eloquent countenance was indelibly engraven on his memory. Amidst the half-uttered prayers which commended her soul to the Divine mercy, and the low dirge of the organ, he advanced with streaming eyes, and reverently raised the covering which concealed the secrets of the grave; when — but why or how portray the appalling and loathsome spectacle? That gentle brow, that eloquent countenance, that form so lately reposing on earth's proudest throne, and extolled with an almost adoring homage!—Don Francis turned from the sight to shudder and to pray.

It was the great epoch in the life of Borgia. In the eyes of the world, indeed, he may have been unchanged; but in his eyes the whole aspect of that world was altered. Lord of a princely fortune, the heir of an illustrious house, the favourite kinsman of the Emperor of the West, renowned in the very flower of his youth as a warrior, a courtier, and a musician, his home hallowed by conjugal love, and gladdened by the sports of his children; for whom had life a deeper interest, or who could erect on a surer basis a loftier fabric of more brilliant hopes? Those interests and hopes he deliberately resigned, and, at the age of twenty-nine, bound himself by a solemn vow, that, in the event of his surviving Eleonora, he would end his days as a member of some religious order. He had gazed on the hideous triumph of death and sin over prospects still more splendid than his own. For him the soothing illusions of existence were no more — earth and its inhabitants, withering under the curse of their Maker, might put on their empty gauds, and for some transient hour dream and talk of happiness. But the curse was there, and there would it lie, crushing the frivolous spirit the most when felt the least, and consigning alike to that foul debasement the lovely and the brave; the sylph now floating through the giddy dance, and the warrior now proudly treading the field of victory.

From such meditations Charles endeavoured to recall his friend to the common duties of life. He required him to assume the viceroyalty of Catalonia, and adorned him with the cross of the order of Saint James of Compostella, then among the noblest and the most highly prized of all chivalric honours. His administration was firm, munificent, and just; it forms the highest era of his life, and is especially signalised by the same sedulous care for the education of the young which afterwards formed his highest praise as General of the Order of Jesus.

Ingenious above all men in mortifying his natural affections, Don Francis could not neglect the occasion which his new dignities afforded him, of incurring much wholesome contumely. Sumptuous banquets must be given in honour of his sovereign; when he could at once fast and be despised for fasting. To exhibit himself in penitential abasement before the people under his authority, would give to penitence the appropriate accompaniment of general contempt. On the festival of "the Invention of the Holy Cross," mysteries, not unlike those of the *Bona Dea*, were to be celebrated by the ladies of Barcelona; when, to prevent the profane intrusion of any of the coarser sex, the viceroy himself undertook the office of sentinel. With a naked dagger in his hand, a young nobleman demanded entrance, addressing to the viceroy insults such as every gentleman is bound, under the heaviest penalty of the laws of chivalry, to expiate by blood. A braver man did not tread the soil of Spain than Don Francis, nor any one to whom the reproach of poltroonery was more hateful. And yet his sword did not leap from his scabbard. With a calm rebuke, and courteous demeanour, he allowed the bravo to enter the sacred precincts — preferring the imputation of cowardice, though stinging like an adder, to the sin of avenging himself, and, indeed, to the duty of maintaining his lawful authority. History has omitted to tell what were the weapons, or what the incantation, by which the ladies promptly ejected the insolent intruder; nor has she recorded how they afterwards received their guardian knight of St. Iago. Her only care has been to excite our admiration for this most illustrious victory, in the bosom of Don Francis, of the meekness of the saint over the human passions of the soldier.

At the end of four years, Don Francis was relieved by the death of his father from his viceregal office, and assumed his hereditary title of Duke of Gandia. His vassals exulted in the munificence of their new chief. The ancient retainers of his family lived on his bounty — cottages, convents, and hospitals, rose on his estates — fortresses were built to check the ravages of the Moorish corsairs, and the mansion of his ancestors reappeared in all its ancient splendour. In every work of piety and mercy the wise and gentle Eleonora was the rival of her lord. But it was the only strife which ever agitated the Castle of Gandia. Austerities were practised there, but gloom and lassitude were unknown; nor did the bright suns of Spain gild any feudal ramparts, within which Love, and Peace, the child of Love, shed their milder light with a more abiding radiance.

But on that countenance, hitherto so calm and so submissive,

might at length be traced the movements of an inward tempest, which, even when prostrate before the altar, the Duke of Gandia, strove in vain to tranquillise. Though conversant with every form of self-inflicted suffering, how should he find strength to endure the impending death of Eleonora! His was a prayer transcending the resources of language and of thought; it was the mute agony of a breaking heart. But after the whirlwind and the fire was heard the still small voice. It said to him, or seemed to say, "If it be thy deliberate wish, she *shall* recover; but it will not be for her real welfare, nor for thine." Adoring gratitude swept away every feebler emotion, and the suppliant's grief at length found utterance. "Thy will be done. Thou knowest what is best for us. Whom have we in heaven but Thee, and whom upon earth should we desire in comparison of Thee?" At the age of thirty-six the Duke of Gandia committed to the tomb the frame once animated by a spirit from which not death itself could separate him. In the sacred retirement to which, in that event, he had devoted his remaining days, Eleonora would still unite her prayers to his; and as each of those days should decline into the welcome shadows of evening, one stage the more towards his reunion with her would have been traversed.

The Castle of Gandia was still hung with the funeral draperies when a welcome though unexpected guest arrived there. It was Peter Faber, the officiating priest at the Crypt of Montmartre, charged by Ignatius with a mission to promote the cause of Christian education in Spain. Aided by his counsels, and by the letters of the patriarch, the duke erected on his estates a church, a college, and a library, and placed them under the care of teachers selected by Ignatius. The sorrows of the duke were relieved as his wealth flowed still more copiously in this new channel of beneficence; and the universities of Alcala and Seville were enlarged by his bounty with similar foundations. But, as Faber remarked, a still nobler edifice was yet to be erected on the soul of the founder himself. The first stone of it was laid in the duke's performance of the Spiritual Exercises. To the completion of this invisible but imperishable building, the remainder of his life was inflexibly devoted.

With Ignatius the duke had long maintained a correspondence, in which the stately courtesies of Spanish noblemen not ungracefully temper the severer tones of patriarchal authority and filial reverence. Admission into the Order of Jesus was an honour for which, in this case, the aspirant was humbly content, and was wisely permitted, long to wait and sue. To study the biography, that he might imitate the life, of Him by whose holy name the



Society was called ; to preach in his own household, or at the wicket of the nunnery of the ladies of St. Clair ; and day by day, to place in humiliating contrast some proof of the Divine goodness and some proof of his own demerit ; were the first probationary steps which the duke was required to tread in the toilsome path on which he had thus entered. It was a path from which Philip, then governing Spain with the title of regent, would have willingly seduced him. He consulted him on the most critical affairs ; summoned him to take a high station in the States of Castile ; and pressed on his acceptance the office of grand master of the royal household. It was declined in favour of the Duke of Alva. Had Gandia preferred the duties of his secular rank to his religious aspirations, Spain might have had a saint the less and seven provinces the more. With the elevation of Alva, the butcheries in the Netherlands, the disgrace of Spain, and the independence of Holland, might have been averted.

Warned by his escape, the duke implored with renewed earnestness his immediate admission into the order ; nor was Ignatius willing that his proselyte should again incur such dangers. At the chapel of his own college he accordingly pronounced the irrevocable vows ; a Papal bull having dispensed, during a term of four years, with any public avowal of the change. They were passed in the final adjustment of his secular affairs. He had lived in the splendour appropriate to his rank and fortune, and in the exercise of the bounty becoming his eminence in the Christian commonwealth. But now all was to be abandoned, even the means of almsgiving ; for he was himself henceforth to live on the alms of others. He gave his children in marriage to the noblest houses in Spain and Portugal, transferred to his eldest son the enjoyment of the patrimonial estates of Gandia, and then, at the age of forty, meekly betook himself to the study of scholastic divinity, of the traditions of the Church, and of the canons of the general councils. He even submitted to all the rules, and performed all the public exercises enforced on the youngest student. Such was his piety, that the thorny fagots of the schoolmen fed instead of smothering the flame ; and on the margin of his Thomas Aquinas might be seen some devout aspiration, extracted by his sacred alchemy from each subtle distinction in the text. Never before or since was the degree of Doctor in Divinity, to which he now proceeded, so hardly earned or so well deserved.

Two of the brothers of the duke had been members of the sacred college, and his humility had refused for two of his sons the purple offered to them at the instance of the emperor. But how should the new doctor avert from his own head the ecclesiastical cap of

maintenance with which Charles was now desirous to replace the ducal coronet? He fled the presence of his imperial patron, made and executed his own testamentary dispositions, delivered his last parental charge to his eldest son, and bade a final adieu to his weeping family. The gates of the Castle of Gandia closed on their self-banished lord. He went forth, like Francis Xavier, chanting the song of David — “When Israel went out of Egypt, and the House of Jacob from a strange people;”—but adding, from another strain of the royal minstrel, the exulting words, “Our bonds are broken and we are delivered.” He lived for more than twenty years from this time, and in his future missions into Spain often passed the gates of the castle, but never more re-entered them. He became a stranger even to his children, never again passing so much as a single day in their society, or even permitting himself to become acquainted with their offspring.

As the bird set free to her nest, so hastened the emancipated duke to take his seat at the footstool of Ignatius. Yet, in his route through Ferrara and Florence, his sacred impatience was arrested, and his humility confirmed, by the unwelcome honours yielded to him by his kinsmen, the reigning sovereigns of those duchies. He would have entered Rome by night; but, in the city of triumphs and ovations, the victorious Loyola could not but desire to exhibit so illustrious a conquest. Attended by the Ambassador of Spain, by a prince of the house of Colonna, and by a long train of cardinals, priests, and nobles, the Duke of Gandia advanced in solemn procession to the Casa Professa. There, in the presence of his General, his wearied spirit found at length the repose which the most profuse liberality of fortune had been unable to bestow. With tears of joy he kissed the feet of the patriarch and of his professed brethren, esteeming the meanest office in their household an honour too exalted for so unworthy an associate; and then, in a general confession, poured into the ear of Ignatius every secret of his conscience from the dawn of life to that long-desired hour.

Such zeal was a treasure too precious to be left without some great and definite object; and as the duke was still the steward of some of this world's treasures, which he had devoted to sacred uses, they were employed in building at Rome the church and college afterwards so famous as the College *de Propaganda Fide*. One only secular care still awaited him. His rank as a grandee of Spain, and the cross of St. Iago, could not be laid aside without the consent of the emperor. It was solicited with all the grace of an accomplished courtier, and all the fervour of a saint. But while he awaited at Rome the answer of Charles, a new alarm disturbed the serenity of the Casa Professa. The dreaded purple was again pressed on him

with all the weight of Papal admonition. To avoid it, Gandia fled the presence of the Pope and of Ignatius, returned to Spain, performed a pilgrimage to the Castle of Loyola, kissed the hallowed ground, and then burying himself in a Jesuit College at Ognato, once more awaited the decision of the emperor.

It soon arrived. He was no longer a duke, a knight of St. Iago, nor even a Spanish gentleman. Solemnly and in due legal form, he renounced all these titles, and with them all his property and territorial rights. Even his secular dress was laid aside, and his head was prepared by the tonsure for the episcopal touch, emblematic of the most awful mystery. The astonished spectators collected and preserved the holy relics. And now, bent in lowly prostration before the altar at Ognato, the Father Francis had no further sacrifice to offer there, but the sacrifice of a heart emptied of all the interests and of all the affections of the world. Long and silent was his prayer, but it was unattended with any trace of disorder. The tears he shed were such as might have bedewed the cheek of the First Man before he had tasted the bitterness of sin. He rose from his knees, bade a last farewell to his attendants; and Father Francis was left alone with his Creator.

It was a solitude not long to be maintained. The fame of his devotion filled the Peninsula. All who needed spiritual counsel, and all who wished to indulge an idle curiosity, resorted to his cell. Kings sought his advice, wondering congregations hung on his lips, and two at least of the grandees of Spain imitated his example. His spiritual triumphs were daily more and more splendid; and, if he might escape the still threatened promotion into the College of Cardinals, might be as enduring as his life. The authority of Ignatius, not unaided by some equivocal exercise of his ingenuity, at length placed Father Francis beyond the reach of this last danger. They both went down to the grave without witnessing the debasement of their order by any ecclesiastical dignity.

But there was yet one tie to the pomp and vanity of this world which could not be entirely broken. During his viceregal administration, Father Francis, had on one occasion traversed the halls of the Castle of Barcelona in deep and secret conference with his imperial cousin. Each at that interview imparted to the other his design of devoting to religious retirement the interval which should intervene between the business and the close of life. At every season of disappointment Charles reverted to this purpose, and abandoned or postponed it with each return of success. But now, broken with sickness and sorrow, he had fixed his residence in a monastery in Estremadura, and summoned the former viceroy of Catalonia to the presence of his early friend and patron. Falling

on his knees, as in times of yore, Father Francis offered to impress the kiss of homage on the hand which had so lately borne the sceptre of half the civilised world. But Charles embraced his cousin, and compelled him to sit, and to sit covered, by his side. Long and frequent were their conversations; but the record of them transmitted to us by the historians of the Order of Jesus, has but little semblance of authenticity. Charles is made to assail, and Borgia to defend the new institute, and the imperial disputant of course yields to the combined force of eloquence and truth. It seems less improbable that the publication of *Memoirs of the Life of the Emperor*, to be written by himself, was one subject of serious debate at these interviews, and that the good father dissuaded it. If the tale be true, he has certainly one claim the less to the gratitude of later times. What seems certain is, that he undertook and executed some secret mission from Charles to the court of Portugal, that he acted as one of the executors of his will, and delivered a funeral oration in praise of the deceased emperor before the Spanish court at Valladolid.

From this point the life of Borgia merges in the general history of the order to which he had attached himself. It is a passage of history full of the miracles of self-denial, and of miracles in the more accurate acceptation of the word. To advance the cause of education, and to place in the hands of his own Society the control of that mighty engine, was the labour which Father Francis, as their General, chiefly proposed to himself. His success was complete, and he lived to see the establishment, in almost every state of Europe, of colleges formed on the model of that which he had himself formed in the town of Gandia.

Borgia is celebrated by his admirers as the most illustrious of all conquerors of the appetites and passions of our common nature; and the praise, such as it is, may well be conceded to him. No other saint in the calendar ever renounced or declined so great an amount of worldly grandeur and domestic happiness. No other embraced poverty and pain in forms more squalid, or more revolting to the flesh and blood. So strange and shocking are the stories of his flagellations, of the diseases contracted by them, and of the sickening practices by which he tormented his senses, that even to read them is of itself no light penance. In the same spirit, our applause is demanded for feats of humility, and prodigies of obedience, and raptures of devotion, so extravagant, that his biographers might seem to have assumed the office of penitential executors to the saint; and to challenge for his memory some of the disgust and contempt which when living he so studiously courted. And yet Borgia was no ordinary man.



He had great talents with a narrow capacity. Under the control of minds more comprehensive than his own, he could adopt and execute their wider views with admirable address and vigour. With rare powers both of endurance and of action, he was the prey of a constitutional melancholy, which made him dependent on the more sanguine spirit of his guides for all his aims and for all his hopes; but once rescued from the agony of selecting his path, he moved along it, not merely with firmness, but with impetuosity. All his impulses came from without; but when once given, they could not readily be arrested. The very dejection and self-distrust of his nature rendered him more liable than other men to impressions at once deep and abiding. Thus he was a saint in his infancy at the bidding of his nurse — then a cavalier at the command of his uncle — an innamorato because the empress desired it — a warrior and a viceroy because such was the pleasure of Charles — a devotee from seeing a corpse in a state of decomposition — a founder of colleges on the advice of Peter Faber — a Jesuit at the will of Ignatius — and General of the Order because his colleagues would have it so. Yet each of these characters, when once assumed, was performed, not merely with constancy, but with high and just applause. His mind was like a sycophant plant, feeble when alone, but of admirable vigour and luxuriance when properly sustained. A whole creation of such men would have been unequal to the work of Ignatius Loyola; but, in his grasp, one such man could perform a splendid though but a secondary service. His life was more eloquent than all the homilies of Chrysostom. Descending from one of the most brilliant heights of human prosperity, he exhibited everywhere, and in an aspect the most intelligible and impressive to his contemporaries, the awful power of the principles by which he was impelled. Had he lived in the times and in the society of his infamous kinsmen, Borgia would not improbably have shared their disastrous renown. But his dependent nature, moulded by a far different influence, rendered him a canonised saint; an honourable, just, and virtuous man; one of the most eminent ministers of a polity as benevolent in intention as it was gigantic in design; and the founder of a system of education pregnant with results of almost matchless importance. His miracles may be not disadvantageously compared with those of the Baron Munchausen; but it would be less easy to find a meet comparison for his genuine virtues. They triumph over all the silly legends and all the real follies which obscure his character. His whole mature life was but one protracted martyrdom, for the advancement of what he esteemed the perfection of his own nature, and the highest interests of his fellow-men. Though he maintained an

intimate personal intercourse with Charles IX. and his mother, and enjoyed their highest favour, there is no reason to suppose that he was entrusted with their atrocious secret. Even in the land of the Inquisition he had firmly refused to lend the influence of his name to that sanguinary tribunal; for there was nothing morose in his fanaticism, nor mean in his subservience. Such a man as Francis Borgia could hardly become a persecutor. His own Church raised altars to his name. Other Churches have neglected or despised it. In that all-wise and all-compassionate judgment, which is uninvaded by our narrow prejudices and by our unhallowed feelings, his fervent love of God and of man was doubtless permitted to cover the multitude of his theoretical errors and real extravagances. Human justice is severe, not merely because man is censorious, but because he reasonably distrusts himself, and fears lest his weakness should confound the distinctions of good and evil. Divine justice is lenient, because there alone love can flow in all its unfathomable depths and boundless expansion — impeded by no dread of error, and diverted by no misplaced sympathies.

To Ignatius, the founder of the Order of the Jesuits; to Xavier, the great leader in their missionary enterprises; to Laynez, the author of their peculiar system of theology; and to Borgia, the architect of their system of education, two names are to be added to complete the roll of the great men from whose hands their Institute received the form it retains to the present hour. These are Bellarmine, from whom they learned the arts and resources of controversy; and Acquaviva, the fifth in number, but in effect the fourth of their Generals — who may be described as the Numa Pompilius of the Order. There is in the early life of Bellarmine a kind of pastoral beauty, and even in his later days a grace, and a simplicity so winning, that it costs some effort to leave such a theme unattempted. The character of Acquaviva, one of the most memorable rulers and lawgivers of his age, it would be a still greater effort to attempt.

“Henceforth let no man say,” (to mount on the stilts of dear old Samuel Johnson,) “Come, I will write a disquisition on the history, the doctrines, and the morality of the Jesuits” — at least let no man say so who has not subdued the lust of story-telling. Filled to their utmost limits, lie before us the sheets so recently destined to that ambitious enterprise. Perhaps it may be as well thus to have yielded to the allurements which have marred the original design. If in later days the disciples of Ignatius, obeying the laws of all human institutions, have exhibited the sure, though slow, development of the seeds of error and of crime, sown by the authors of their polity, it must at least be admitted that they were

men of no common mould. It is something to know that an impulse, which, after three centuries, is still unspent, proceeded from hands of gigantic power, and that their power was moral as much as intellectual, or much more so. In our own times much indignation and much alarm are thrown away on innovators of a very different stamp. From the ascetics of the common room, from men whose courage rises high enough only to hint at their unpopular opinions, and whose belligerent passions soar at nothing more daring than to worry some unfortunate professor, it is almost ludicrous to fear any great movement on the theatre of human affairs. When we see these dainty gentlemen in rags, and hear of them from the snows of the Himalaya, we may begin to tremble.

The slave of his own appetites, in bondage to conventional laws, his spirit emasculated by the indulgences, or corroded by the cares of life, hardly daring to act, to speak, or to think for himself, man — gregarious and idolatrous man — worships the world in which he lives, adopts its maxims, and treads its beaten paths. To rouse him from his lethargy, and to give a new current to his thoughts, heroes appear from time to time on the verge of his horizon, and hero-worship, Pagan or Christian, withdraws him for a while from still baser idolatry. To contemplate the motives and the career of such men, may teach much which well deserves the knowing; but nothing more clearly than this — that no one can have shrines erected to his memory in the hearts of men of distant generations, unless his own heart was an altar on which daily sacrifices of fervent devotion, and magnanimous self-denial, were offered to the only true object of human worship.

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## MARTIN LUTHER.\*

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ENGLISH literature is singularly defective in whatever relates to the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland, and to the lives of the great men by whom it was accomplished. A native of this island who would know anything to the purpose, of Reuchlin or Hutten, of Luther or Melancthon, of Zuingle, Bucer, or Œcolampadius, of Calvin or Farel, must betake himself to other languages than his own. To fill this void in our libraries, is an enterprise which might stimulate the zeal, and establish the reputation, of the ripest student of Ecclesiastical History amongst us. In no other field could he discover more ample resources for narratives of dramatic interest; for the delineation of characters contrasted in every thing except their common design; for exploring the influence of philosophy, arts, and manners, on the fortunes of mankind; and for reverently tracing the footsteps of Divine Providence, moving among the ways and works of men, imparting dignity to events otherwise unimportant, and a deep significance to occurrences in any other view as trivial as a border raid, or as the palaver of an African village.

Take, for example, the life of Ulric de Hutten, a noble, a warrior, and a rake; a theologian withal, and a Reformer; and at the same time the author, or one of the authors, of a satire to be classed amongst the most effective which the world has ever seen. Had the recreative powers of Walter Scott been exercised on Hutten's story, how familiar would all Christendom have been with the stern

\* Any interest which may have attached to this essay, on its first appearance, has been so effectually superseded by Mr. Hazlitt's more recent work on Luther, that the republication of it now, could hardly be justified, were it not that it forms an essential part of the series to which it belongs, by exhibiting the singular contrast between the characters of the great German Reformer, and of the Founders of Jesuitism. Every one, however, who wishes to understand the personal character of Martin Luther, will of course study it in Mr. Hazlitt's book, and in the authorities to which he refers.



Baron of Franconia, and Ulric, his petulant boy; with the fat Abbot of Fulda driving the fiery youth by penances and homilies to range a literary vagabond on the face of the earth; and with the burgomaster of Frankfort, avenging by a still more formidable punishment the pasquinade which had insulted his civic dignity. How vivid would be the image of Hutten at the siege of Pavia, soothing despair itself by writing his own epitaph; giving combat to five Frenchmen for the glory of Maximilian; and receiving from the delighted Emperor the frugal reward of a poetic crown. Then would have succeeded the court and princely patronage of "the Pope of Mentz," and the camp and castle of the Lord of Sickengen, until the chequered scene closed with Ulric's death-bed employment of producing a satire on his stupid physician.

All things were welcome to Hutten; arms and love, theology and debauchery, a disputation with the Thomists, a controversy with Erasmus, or a war to the knife with the dunces of his age. His claim to have written the *Epistole Obscurorum Virorum*, has, indeed, been disputed, though with little apparent reason. It is at least clear that he asserted his own title, and that no other candidate for that equivocal honour united in himself the wit and learning, the audacity and licentiousness, which successively adorn and disfigure that extraordinary work. Neither is it quite just to exclude the satirist from the list of those who lent a material aid to the Reformation. It is not, certainly, by the heartiest or the most contemptuous laugh that dynasties, whether civil or religious, are subverted; but it would be unfair to deny altogether to Hutten the praise of having contributed by his merciless banter to the successes of wiser and better men than himself. To set on edge the teeth of the Ciceronians by the Latinity of the correspondents of the profound Ortuinus, was but a pleasant jest; but it was something more to confer an immortality of ridicule on the erudite doctors who seriously apprehended, from the study of Greek and Hebrew, the revival at once of the worship of Minerva, and of the rite of circumcision. It was in strict satirical justice, that places were assigned to these sages in a farce as broad as was ever drawn by Aristophanes or Molière; a farce which was destitute neither of the riotous mirth, nor even of some of that deep wisdom which it was the pleasure of those great dramatists to exhibit beneath that grotesque mask.

Much as Luther himself *incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit*, he received with little relish these sallies of his facetious ally; whom he not only censured for employing the language of reproach and insult, but, harder still, described as a buffoon. It is, perhaps, well for the dignity of the stern Reformer that the taunt was unknown

to the object of it; for, great as he was, Hutten would not have spared him; and as the quiver of few satirists had been stored with keener or more envenomed shafts, so, few illustrious men have exposed to such an assailant a greater number of vulnerable points. But of these, or of the other private habits of Luther, little is generally recorded. History having claimed him for her own, Biography has yielded to the pretensions of her more stately sister; and the domestic and interior life of the antagonist of Leo and of Charles yet remains to be written.

The materials are abundant, and of the highest interest; — a collection of letters scarcely less voluminous than those of Voltaire; the *Colloquia Mensalia*, in some parts of more doubtful authenticity, yet, on the whole, a genuine record of his conversation; his theological writings, a mine of egotisms of the richest ore; and the works of Melancthon, Seckendorf, Cochläus, Erasmus, and many others, who flourished in an age when, amongst learned men, to write and to live were almost convertible terms. M. Merle D'Aubigné's "History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in Germany, Switzerland, &c.," is, in fact, an unfinished Life of Luther, closing with his appeal from the Pope to a General Council. It is the most elaborate of a long series of works on the Reformation, recently published on the Continent, by the present inheritors of the principles and passions which first agitated Europe in the beginning of the sixteenth century. By far the most amusing of the series is the collection of *Lutheriana* by M. Michelet, which we are bound to notice with especial gratitude, as affording a greater number of valuable references than all other books of the same kind put together. It was drawn up as a relaxation from those severer studies on which M. Michelet's historical fame depends. But the pastime of some men is worth far more than the labours of the rest; and this compilation has every merit but that of an appropriate title; for an autobiography it assuredly is not, in any of the senses, accurate or popular, of that much abused word.

Insulated in our habits and pursuits, not less than in our geographical position, it is but tardily that within the intrenchment of our four seas, we sympathise with the intellectual movements of the nations which dwell beyond them. Many, however, are the motives, of at least equal force in these islands as in the old and new continents of the Christian world, for diverting the eye from the present to the past, from those who would now reform, to those who first reformed, the churches of Europe. Or, if graver reasons could not be found, it is beyond all dispute that the professors of Wittenberg, three hundred years ago, formed a group as much more entertaining than those of Oxford at present, as the con-

test with Dr. Eck exceeded in interest the squabble with Dr. Hampden.

The old Adam in Martin Luther (a favourite subject of his discourse) was a very formidable personage; lodged in a bodily frame of surpassing vigour, solicited by vehement appetites, and alive to all the passions by which man is armed for offensive or defensive warfare with his fellows. In accordance with a general law, that temperament was sustained by nerves which shrunk neither from the endurance nor the infliction of necessary pain; and by a courage which rose at the approach of difficulty, and exulted in the presence of danger. A rarer prodigality of nature combined with these endowments an inflexible reliance on the conclusions of his own understanding, and on the energy of his own will. He came forth on the theatre of life another Samson Agonistes, "with plain heroic magnitude of mind, and celestial vigour armed;" ready to wage an unequal combat with the haughtiest of the giants of Gath; or to shake down, though it were on his own head, the columns of the proudest of her temples.

Viewed in his belligerent aspect, he might have seemed a being cut off from the common brotherhood of mankind, and bearing from on high a commission to bring to pass the remote ends of the Divine benevolence, by means appalling to human guilt and to human weakness. But he was reclaimed into the bosom of the great family of man, by bonds strong and numerous in proportion to the vigour of the propensities they were intended to control. There brooded over him a constitutional melancholy, sometimes engendering sadness, but more often giving birth to dreams so wild, that, if vivified by the imagination of Dante, they might have passed into visions as awful and majestic as those of the *Inferno*. As these mists rolled away bright gleams of sunshine took their place; and that robust mind yielded itself to social enjoyments, with the hearty relish, the broad humour, and the glorious profusion of sense and nonsense, which betoken the relaxations of those who abdicate an habitual sovereignty over other men to become, for a passing hour, their companions. Luther had other and yet more potent spells with which to cast out the demons who haunted him. He had ascertained and taught that the spirit of darkness abhors sweet sounds not less than light itself; for music (he says), while it chases away the evil suggestions, effectually baffles the wiles of the tempter. His lute, and hand, and voice, accompanying his own solemn melodies, were therefore raised to repel the more vehement aggressions of the enemy of mankind; whose feebler assaults he encountered by studying the politics of a rookery, by assigning to each beautiful creation of his flower-beds an appro-

priate sylph or genius, by the company of his Catherine de Bora, and the sports of their saucy John and playful Magdalene.

The name of Catherine has long enjoyed a wide but doubtful celebrity. She was a lady of noble birth, and was still young when she renounced the ancient faith, her convent, and her vows, to become the wife of Martin Luther. From this portentous union of a monk and nun, the "obscure men" confidently predicted the birth of Antichrist; while the wits and scholars greeted their nuptials with a thick hail-storm of epigrams, hymns, and dithyrambics, the learned Eccius himself chiming into the loud chorus with an elaborate epithalamium. The bridegroom met the tempest with the spirit of another Benedict, by a counter-blast of invective and sarcasms, which, afterwards collected under the title of "the Lion and the Ass," perpetuated the memory of this redoubtable controversy. "My enemies," he exclaimed, "triumphed. They shouted, *Io, Io!* I was resolved to show that, old and feeble as I am, I am not going to sound a retreat. I trust I shall do still more to spoil their merriment."

This indiscreet, if not criminal marriage, scarcely admitted a more serious defence. Yet Luther was not a man to do anything which he was not prepared to justify. "He had inculcated on others the advantages of the conjugal state, and was bound to enforce his precepts by his example. The war of the peasants had brought reproach on the principles of the Reformation; and it was incumbent on him to sustain the minds of his followers, and to bear his testimony to evangelical truth by deeds as well as words. Therefore, it was fit that he should marry a nun." Such is the logic of inclination, and such the presumption of uninterrupted success. "Dr. Ortuinus" himself never lent his venerable sanction to a stranger sophistry, than that which could thus discover in one great scandal an apology for another far more justly offensive.

Catherine was a very pretty woman, if Holbein's portrait may be believed; although even her personal charms have been rudely impugned by her husband's enemies, in grave disquisitions devoted to that momentous question. Better still, she was a faithful and affectionate wife. But there is a no less famous Catherine to whom she bore a strong family resemblance. She brought from her nunnery an anxious mind, a shrewish temper, and great volubility of speech. Luther's arts were not those of Petruchio. With him reverence for woman was at once a natural instinct and a point of doctrine. He observed, that when the first woman was brought to the first man to receive her name, he called her not wife but mother — "Eve, the mother of all living" — a word, he says, "more eloquent than ever fell from the lips of Demosthenes."



So, like a wise and kind-hearted man, when his Catherine prattled he smiled; when she frowned, he playfully stole away her anger, and chided her anxieties with the gentlest soothing. A happier or a more peaceful home was not to be found in that land of domestic tenderness. Yet the confession must be made, that, from first to last, this love tale is nothing less than a case of *lusa majestas* against the sovereignty of romance. Luther and his bride did not meet on either side with the raptures of a first affection. He had long before sighed for the fair Ave Schonfelden, and she had not concealed her attachment for a certain Jerome Baungartner. Ave had bestowed herself in marriage on a physician of Prussia; and before Luther's irrevocable vows were pledged, Jerome received from his great rival an intimation that he still possessed the heart, and, with common activity, might even yet secure the hand, of Catherine. But honest Jerome was not a man to be hurried. He silently resigned his pretensions to his illustrious competitor, who, even in the moment of success, had the discernment to perceive, and the frankness to avow, that his love was not of a flaming or ungovernable nature.

"Nothing on this earth," said the good Dame Ursula Schweickard, with whom Luther boarded when at school at Eisenach, "is of such inestimable value as a woman's love." This maxim, recommended more, perhaps, by truth than originality, dwelt long on the mind and on the tongue of the Reformer. To have dismissed this or any other text without a commentary would have been abhorrent from his habits of mind; and in one of his letters to Catherine he thus insists on a kindred doctrine, the converse of the first. "The greatest favour of God is to have a good and pious husband, to whom you can entrust your all, your person, and even your life; whose children and yours are the same. Catherine, you have a pious husband who loves you. You are an empress; thank God for it." His conjugal meditations were often in a gayer mood; as for example,—“If I were going to make love again I would carve an obedient woman out of marble, in despair of finding one in any other way.”—“During the first year of our marriage she would sit by my side while I was at my books, and, not having anything else to say, would ask me whether, in Prussia, the Margrave and the house steward were not always brothers.”—“Did you say your Pater, Catherine, before you began that sermon? If you had, I think you would have been forbidden to preach.” He addresses her sometimes as my Lord Catherine, or Catherine the Queen, the Empress, the Doctress; or as Catherine the rich and noble Lady of Zeilsdorf, where they had a cottage and a few roods of ground. But as age advanced, these playful sallies were abandoned for the

following graver and more affectionate style. "To the gracious Lady Catherine Luther, my dear wife, who vexes herself overmuch, grace and peace in the Lord! Dear Catherine, you should read St. John, and what is said in the Catechism of the confidence to be reposed in God. Indeed you torment yourself as though he were not Almighty, and could not produce new Doctors Martin by the score, if the old doctor should drown himself in the Saal. — There is one who watches over me more effectually than thou canst, or than all the angels. He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty. Therefore be calm."

There were six children of this marriage; and it is at once touching and amusing to see with what adroitness Luther contrived to gratify at once his tenderness as a father and his taste as a theologian. When the brightening eye of one of the urchins round his table confessed the allurements of a downy peach, it was "the image of a soul rejoicing in hope." Over an infant pressed to his mother's bosom, thus moralised the severe but affectionate Reformer: "That babe and everything else which belongs to us is hated by the Pope, by Duke George, by their adherents, and by all the devils. Yet, dear little fellow, he troubles himself not a whit for all these powerful enemies; he gaily sucks the breast, looks round him with a loud laugh, and lets them storm as they like." There were darker seasons when even theology and polemics give way to the more powerful voice of nature; nor, indeed, has the deepest wisdom anything to add to his lamentation over the bier of his daughter Magdalene. "Such is the power of natural affection, that I cannot endure this without tears and groans, or rather an utter deadness of heart. At the bottom of my soul are engraven her looks, her words, her gestures, as I gazed at her in her lifetime and on her deathbed. My dutiful, my gentle daughter! even the death of Christ (and what are all deaths compared to his?) cannot tear me from this thought as it should. She was playful, lovely, and full of love!"

Whatever others may think of these nursery tales, we have certain reasons of our own for suspecting that there is not, on either side of the Tweed, a *Papa* who will not read the following letter, sent by Luther to his eldest boy during the Diet of Augsburg, with more interest than any or all of the five "Confessions" presented to the Emperor on that memorable occasion.

"Grace and peace be with thee, my dear little boy! I rejoice to find that you are attentive to your lessons and your prayers. Persevere, my child, and when I come home I will bring you some pretty fairing. I know of a beautiful garden, full of children in golden dresses, who run about under the trees, eating apples, pears,

cherries, nuts, and plums. They jump and sing and are full of glee, and they have pretty little horses with golden bridles and silver saddles. As I went by this garden I asked the owner of it who those children were, and he told me that they were the good children, who loved to say their prayers, and to learn their lessons, and who fear God. Then I said to him, Dear sir, I have a boy, little John Luther; may not he too come to this garden, to eat these beautiful apples and pears, to ride these pretty little horses, and to play with the other children? And the man said, If he is very good, if he says his prayers, and learns his lessons cheerfully, he may come, and he may bring with him little Philip and little James. Here they will find fifes and drums and other nice instruments to play upon, and they shall dance and shoot with little crossbows. Then the man showed me in the midst of the garden a beautiful meadow to dance in. But all this happened in the morning before the children had dined; so I could not stay till the beginning of the dance, but I said to the man, I will go and write to my dear little John, and teach him to be good, to say his prayers, and learn his lessons, that he may come to this garden. But he has an Aunt Magdalene, whom he loves very much—may he bring her with him? The man said, Yes, tell him that they may come together. Be good therefore, dear child, and tell Philip and James the same, that you may all come and play in this beautiful garden. I commit you to the care of God. Give my love to your Aunt Magdalene, and kiss her for me. From your Papa who loves you,—Martin Luther.”

If it be not a sufficient apology for the quotation of this fatherly epistle to say, that it is the talk of Martin Luther, a weightier defence may be drawn from the remark that it illustrates one of his most serious opinions. The views commonly received amongst Christians, of the nature of the happiness reserved in another state of being, for the obedient and faithful in this life, he regarded, if not as erroneous, yet as resting on no sufficient foundation, and as ill adapted to “allure to brighter worlds.” He thought that the enjoyments of Heaven had been refined away to such a point of evanescent spirituality as to deprive them of their necessary attraction; and the allegory invented for the delight of little John, was but the adaptation to the thoughts of a child of a doctrine which he was accustomed to inculcate on others, under imagery more elevated than that of drums, crossbows, and golden bridles.

There is but one step from the nursery to the servants’ hall; and they who have borne with the parental counsels to little John, may endure the following letter respecting an aged namesake of his who was about to quit Luther’s family:—

“We must dismiss old John with honour. We know that he has always served us faithfully and zealously, and as became a Christian servant. What have we not given to vagabonds and thankless students who have made a bad use of our money? So we will not be niggardly to so worthy a servant, on whom our money will be bestowed in a manner pleasing to God. You need not remind me that we are not rich. I would gladly give him ten florins if I had them, but do not let it be less than five. He is not able to do much for himself. Pray help him in any other way you can. Think how this money can be raised. There is a silver cup which might be pawned. Sure I am that God will not desert us. Adieu.”

Luther's pleasures were as simple as his domestic affections were pure. He wrote metrical versions of the Psalms, so well described by Mr. Hallam, as holding a middle place between the doggerel of Sternhold and Hopkins, and the meretricious ornaments of the later versifiers of the Songs of David. He wedded to them music of his own, to which the most obtuse ear cannot listen without emotion. The greatest of the sons of Germany was, in this respect, a true child of that vocal land; for such was his enthusiasm for the art, that he assigned to it a place second only to that of theology itself. He was also an ardent lover of painting, and yielded to Albert Durer the homage which he denied to Cajetan and Erasmus. His are among the earliest works embellished by the aid of the engraver. With the birds of his native country he had established a strict intimacy, watching, smiling, and moralising over their habits. “That little fellow,” he said of a bird going to roost, “has chosen his shelter, and is quietly rocking himself to sleep without a care for to-morrow's lodging, calmly holding by his little twig, and leaving God to think for him.” The following parable, in a letter to Spalatin, is in a more ambitious strain:—

“You are going to Augsburg without having taken the auspices, and ignorant when you will be allowed to begin. I, on the other hand, am in the midst of the Comitia, in the presence of illustrious sovereigns, kings, dukes, grandees, and nobles, who are solemnly debating affairs of state, and making the air ring with their deliberations and decrees. Instead of imprisoning themselves in those royal caverns which you call palaces, they hold their assemblies in the sunshine, with the arch of Heaven for their tent, substituting for costly tapestries the foliage of trees, where they enjoy their liberty. Instead of confining themselves in parks and pleasure grounds, they range over the earth to its utmost limits. They detest the stupid luxuries of silk and embroidery, but all dress in the same colour, and put on very much the same looks. To say the truth, they all wear black, and all sing one tune. It is a song



formed of a single note, with no variation but what is produced by the pleasing contrast of young and old voices. I have seen and heard nothing of their emperor. They have a supreme contempt for the quadruped employed by our gentry, having a much better method for setting the heaviest artillery at defiance. As far as I have been able to understand their resolutions by the aid of an interpreter, they have unanimously determined to wage war through the whole year against the wheat, oats, and barley, and the best corn and fruits of every kind. There is reason to fear that victory will attend them everywhere; for they are a skilful and crafty race of warriors, equally expert in collecting booty by violence and by surprise. It has afforded me great pleasure to attend their assemblies as an idle looker-on. The hope I cherish of the triumphs of their valour over the wheat and barley, and every other enemy, renders me the sincere and faithful friend of these *patres patriæ*, these saviours of the commonwealth. If I could serve them by a wish, I would implore their deliverance from their present ugly name of Crows. This is nonsense, but there is some seriousness in it. It is a jest which helps me to drive away painful thoughts."

The love of fables, which Luther thus indulged at one of the most eventful eras of his life, was amongst his favourite amusements. Æsop lay on the same table with the book of Psalms, and the two translations proceeded alternately. Except the Bible, he declared that he knew no better book; and pronounced it not to be the work of any single author, but the fruit of the labours of the greatest minds in all ages. It supplied him with endless jests and allusions; as, for example, — "The dog in charge of the butcher's tray, unable to defend it from the avidity of other curs, said, — 'Well, then, I may as well have my share of the meat,' and fell to accordingly; which is precisely what the Emperor is doing with the property of the church."

Few really great men, indeed, have hazarded a larger number of jokes in the midst of a circle of note-taking associates. They have left on record the following amidst many other *memorabilia*: — "God made the Priest. The Devil set about an imitation, but he made the tonsure too large, and produced a Monk." A cup composed of five hoops or rings of glass of different colours circulated at his table. Eisleben, an Antinomian, was of the party. Luther pledged him in the following words: — "Within the second of these rings lie the Ten Commandments; within the next ring the Creed; then comes the Paternoster; the Catechism lies at the bottom." So saying, he drank it off. When Eisleben's turn came, he emptied the cup only down to the beginning of the second ring.

"Ah," said Luther, "I knew that he would stick at the Commandments, and therefore would not reach the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, or the Catechism."

It must be confessed, however, that Luther's pleasantries are less remarkable for wit or delicacy than for the union of strong sense and honest merriment. They were the careless, though not inconsiderate sport of a free-spoken man, in a circle where religion and modesty, protected by an inbred reverence, did not seek the doubtful defence of conventional outworks. But pensive thoughts were the more habitual food of his overburdened mind. Neither social enjoyments, nor the tenderness of domestic life, could ever long repel the melancholy which brooded over him. It breaks out in every part of his correspondence, and tinges all his recorded conversation. "Because," he says, "my manner is sometimes gay and joyous, many think that I am always treading on roses. God knows what is in my heart." "There is nothing in this life which gives me pleasure; I am tired of it. May the Lord come quickly and take me hence. Let him come to his final judgment—I await the blow. Let him hurl his thunders that I may be at rest." "Forty years more life! I would not purchase Paradise at such a price." Yet with this lassitude of the world, his contemplations of death were solemn even to sadness. "How gloriously," said his friend, Dr. Jonas, "does St. Paul speak of his own death. I cannot enter into this." "It appears to me," replied Luther, "that when meditating on that subject, even St. Paul himself could not have felt all the energy which possessed him when he wrote. I preach, write, and talk about dying, with a greater firmness than I really possess, or than others ascribe to me." In common with all men of this temperament, he was profuse in extolling the opposite disposition. "The birds," he says, "must fly over our heads, but why allow them to roost in our hair?" "Gaiety and a light heart, in all virtue and decorum, are the best medicine for the young, or rather for all. I, who have passed my life in dejection and gloomy thoughts, now catch at enjoyment, come from what quarter it may, and even seek for it. Criminal pleasure, indeed, comes from Satan, but that which we find in the society of good and pious men is approved by God. Ride, hunt with your friends, amuse yourself in their company. Solitude and melancholy are poison. They are deadly to all, but, above all, to the young."

The sombre character of Luther's mind cannot be correctly understood by those who are wholly ignorant of the legendary traditions of his native land. This remark is made and illustrated by M. Henry Heine, with that curious knowledge of such lore as none but a denizen of Germany could acquire. In the mines of

Mansfeld, at Eisenach, and at Erfurth, the visible and the invisible worlds were almost equally populous; and the training of youth was not merely a discipline for the future offices of life, but an initiation into mysteries as impressive, though not quite so sublime, as those of Eleusis. The unearthly inhabitants of every land are near of kin to the human cultivators of the soil. The Kill-kropff of Saxony differed from a fairy or a hamadryad as a Saxon differs from a Frenchman or a Greek; the thin essences by which these spiritual bodies are sustained being distilled according to their various national tastes, from the dews of Hymettus, the light wines of Provence, and the strong beer of Germany. At the fire-side around which Luther's family drew, in his childhood, there gathered a race of imps who may be considered as the presiding genii of the turnspit and the stable;—witches expert in the right use of the broomstick, but incapable of perverting it into a locomotive engine; homely in gait, coarse in feature, sordid in their habits, with canine appetites and superhuman powers, and, for the most part, eaten up with misanthropy. When, in his twentieth year, Luther for the first time opened the Bible, and read there of spiritual agents, the inveterate enemies of our race, these *spectra* were projected on a mind over which such legends had already exercised an indestructible influence. Satan and his angels crowded upon his imagination, neither as shapeless presences casting their gloomy shadows on the soul, nor as mysterious impersonations of her foul and cruel desires, nor as warriors engaged with the powers of light, and love, and holiness, in the silent motionless war of antagonistic energies. Luther's devils were a set of athletic, cross-grained, ill-conditioned wretches, with vile shapes and fiendish faces; who, like the monsters of Dame Ursula's kitchen, gave buffet for buffet, hate for hate, and joke for joke. His Satan was not only something less than archangel ruined, but was quite below the society of that Prince of Darkness, whom Mad Tom in *Lear* declares to have been a gentleman. Possessing a sensitive rather than a creative imagination, Luther transferred the visionary lore, drawn from these humble sources, to the machinery of the great epic of revelation, with but little change or embellishment; and thus contrived to reduce to the level of very vulgar prose some of the noblest conceptions of inspired poetry.

At the Castle of Wartburg—his Patmos,—where he dwelt the willing prisoner of his friendly sovereign, the Reformer chanced to have a plate of nuts at his supper table. How many of them he swallowed, there is, unfortunately, no Boswell to tell; yet, perhaps, not a few—for, as he slept, the nuts, animated as it would seem by the demon of the pantry, executed a sort of waltz, knocking

against each other, and against the slumberer's bedstead; when, lo! the staircase became possessed by a hundred barrels rolling up and down, under the guidance, probably, of the imp of the spigot. Yet all approach to Luther's room was barred by chains and by an iron door—vain entrenchments against Satan! He arose, solemnly defied the fiend, repeated the eighth Psalm, and resigned himself to sleep. Another visit from the same fearful adversary at Nuremberg led to the opposite result. The Reformer flew from his bed to seek refuge in society.

Once upon a time, Carlostadt, the Sacramentarian, being in the pulpit, saw a tall man enter the church, and take his seat by one of the burgesses of the town. The intruder then retired, betook himself to the preacher's house, and exhibited frightful symptoms of a disposition to break all the bones of his child. Thinking better of it, however, he left with the boy a message for Carlostadt, that he might be looked for again in three days. It is needless to add that, on the third day, there was an end of the poor preacher, and of his attacks on Luther and Consubstantiation.

In the cloisters of Wittenburg, Luther himself heard that peculiar noise which attests the devil's presence. It came from behind a stove, resembling, for all the world, the sound of throwing a faggot on the fire. This sound, however, is not invariable. An old priest, in the attitude of prayer, heard Satan behind him, grunting like a whole herd of swine. "Ah! ah! master devil," said the priest, "you have your deserts. There was a time when you were a beautiful angel, and there you are turned into a rascally hog!" The priest's devotions proceeded without further disturbance; "for," observed Luther, "there is nothing the devil can bear so little as contempt." He once saw and even touched a Killkropff or supposititious child. This was at Dessau. The deviling—for it had no other parent than Satan himself—was about twelve years old, and looked exactly like any other boy. But the unlucky brat could do nothing but eat. He consumed as much food as four ploughmen. When things went ill in the house, his laugh was to be heard all over it. If matters went smoothly, there was no peace for his screaming. Luther declares (of course sportively) that he recommended the Elector to have this scapegrace thrown into the Moldau, as it was a mere lump of flesh without a soul.

His visions sometimes assumed a deeper significance, if not a loftier aspect. In the year 1496, a frightful monster was discovered in the Tiber. It had the head of an ass, an emblem of the Pope; for the Church being a spiritual body incapable of a head the Pope, who had audaciously assumed that character, was fitly represented under this asinine figure. The right hand resembled



an elephant's foot, typifying the Papal tyranny over the weak and timid. The right foot was like an ox's hoof, shadowing forth the spiritual oppression exercised by doctors, confessors, nuns, monks, and scholastic theologians; while the left foot, armed with griffin's claws, could mean nothing else than the various ministers of the Pope's civil authority. How far Luther believed in the existence of the monster whose mysterious signification he thus interprets, it would not be easy to decide. Yet it is difficult to read his exposition, and to suppose it a mere pleasantry.

So constantly was he haunted with this midnight crew of devils, as to have raised a serious doubt of his sanity, which even Mr. Hallam does not entirely discountenance. Yet the hypothesis is surely gratuitous. Intense study deranging the digestive organs of a man, whose bodily constitution required vigorous exercise, and whose mind had been early stored with such dreams as we have mentioned, sufficiently explains the restless importunity of the goblins amongst whom he lived. It is easier for a man to be in advance of his age on any subject than on this. It may be doubted whether the nerves of Seneca or Pliny would have been equal to a solitary evening walk by the lake Avernus. What wonder, then, if Martin Luther was convinced that suicides fall not by their own hands, but by those of diabolical emissaries, who really adjust the cord or point the knife — that particular spots, as, for example, the pool near the summit of the Mons Pilatus, were desecrated to Satan — that the wailings of his victims are to be heard in the howlings of the night wind — or that the throwing a stone into a pond in his own neighbourhood, immediately provoked such struggles of the evil spirit imprisoned below the water, as shook the neighbouring country like an earthquake?

The mental *phantasmagoria* of so illustrious a man are an exhibition to which no one who reveres his name would needlessly direct an unfriendly or an idle gaze. But the infirmities of our nature often afford the best measure of its strength. To estimate the power by which temptation is overcome, you must ascertain the force of the propensities to which it is addressed. Amongst the elements of Luther's character was an awe, verging towards idolatry, for all things, whether in the works of God or in the institutions of man, which can be regarded as depositories of the Divine power, or as delegates of the Divine authority. From pantheism, the disease of imaginations at once devout and unhallowed, he was preserved in youth by his respect for the doctrines of the Church; and, in later life, by his absolute surrender of his own judgment to the text of the sacred canon. But as far as a pantheistic habit of thought and feeling can consist with the most

unqualified belief in the incommunicable Unity of the Divine nature, such thoughts and feelings were habitual to him.

The same spirit which solemnly acknowledged the existence, whilst it abhorred the use, of the high faculties which, according to the popular faith, the foul fiends of earth, and air, and water, at once enjoy and pervert, contemplated with almost prostrate reverence the majesty and the hereditary glories of Rome; and the apostolical succession of her pontiff, with kings and emperors for his tributaries, the Catholic hierarchy as his vicegerents, and the human mind his universal empire. To brave the vengeance of such a dynasty, wielding the mysterious keys which close the gates of hell and open the portals of heaven, long appeared to Luther an impious audacity, of which nothing less than woe, eternal and unutterable, would be the sure and appropriate penalty. For a man of his temperament to hush these superstitious terrors, and abjure the golden idol to which the adoring eyes of all nations, kindred, and languages were directed, was a self-conquest, such as none but the most heroic minds can achieve; and to which even they are unequal, unless sustained by an invisible but omnipotent arm. For no error can be more extravagant than that which would reduce Martin Luther to the rank of a coarse spiritual demagogue. The deep self-distrust which, for ten successive years, postponed his irreconcilable war with Rome, clung to him to the last; nor was he ever unconscious of the dazzling splendour of the pageantry which his own hand had contributed so largely to overthrow. There is no alloy of affectation in the following avowal, taken from one of his letters to Erasmus:

“You must, indeed, feel yourself in some measure awed in the presence of a succession of learned men, and by the consent of so many ages, during which flourished scholars so conversant in sacred literature, and martyrs illustrious by so many miracles. To all this must be added the more modern theologians, universities, bishops, and popes. On their side are arrayed learning, genius, numbers, dignity, station, power, sanctity, miracles, and what not. On mine Wycliff and Laurentius Valla, and, though you forget to mention him, Augustine also. Then comes Luther, a mean man, born but yesterday, supported only by a few friends, who have neither learning, nor genius, nor greatness, nor sanctity, nor miracles. Put them altogether, and they have not wit enough to cure a spavined horse. What are they? What the wolf said of the nightingale — a voice, and nothing else. I confess it is with reason you pause in such a presence as this. For ten years together I hesitated myself. Could I believe that this Troy, which had triumphed over so many assaults, would fall at last? I call God

to witness that I should have persisted in my fears, and should have hesitated until now, if truth had not compelled me to speak. You may well believe that my heart is not rock; and if it were, yet so many are the waves and storms which have beaten upon it, that it must have yielded when the whole weight of this authority came thundering on my head, like a deluge ready to overwhelm me."

The same feelings were expressed at a later time in the following words:—

"I daily perceive how difficult it is to overcome long-cherished scruples. Oh, what pain has it cost me, though the Scripture is on my side, to defend myself to my own heart for having dared singly to resist the Pope, and to denounce him as Antichrist! What have been the afflictions of my bosom! How often, in the bitterness of my soul, have I pressed myself with the Papist's argument,—Art thou alone wise? are all others in error? have they been mistaken for so long a time? What if you are yourself mistaken, and are dragging with you so many souls into eternal condemnation? Thus did I reason with myself, till Jesus Christ, by his own infallible word, tranquillised my heart, and sustained it against this argument, as a reef of rocks thrown up against the waves laughs at all their fury."

He who thus acknowledged the influence, while he defied the despotism, of human authority, was self-annihilated in the presence of his Maker. "I have learned," he says, 'from the Holy Scriptures, that it is a perilous and a fearful thing to speak in the House of God; to address those who will appear in judgment against us, when at the last day we shall be found in His presence; when the gaze of the angels shall be directed to us, when every creature shall behold the Divine Word, and shall listen till He speaks. Truly, when I think of this, I have no wish but to be silent, and to cancel all that I have written. It is a fearful thing to be called to render to God an account of every idle word."

Philip Melancthon occasionally endeavoured, by affectionate applause, to sustain and encourage the mind which was thus bowed down under the sense of unworthiness. But the praise, even of the chosen friend of his bosom, found no echo there. He rejected it, kindly indeed, but with a rebuke so earnest and passionate, as to show that the commendations of him whom he loved and valued most were unwelcome. They served but to deepen the depressing consciousness of ill desert, inseparable from his lofty conceptions of the duties which had been assigned to him.

In Luther, as in other men, the stern and heroic virtues demanded for their support that profound lowliness which might at

first appear the most opposed to their development. The eye which often turns inward with self-complacency, or habitually looks round for admiration, is never long or steadfastly fixed on any more elevated object. It is permitted to no man at once to court the applauses of the world, and to challenge a place amongst the generous and devoted benefactors of his species. The enervating spell of vanity, so fatal to many a noble intellect, exercised no perceptible control over Martin Luther. Though conscious of the rare endowments he had received from Providence (of which that very consciousness was not the least important), the secret of his strength lay in the heartfelt persuasion, that his superiority to other men gave him no title to their commendations, and in his abiding sense of the little value of such praises. The growth of his social affections was unimpeded by self-regarding thoughts; and he could endure the frowns and even the coldness of those whose approving smiles he judged himself unworthy to receive, and did not much care to win.

His was not that feeble benevolence which leans for support, or depends for existence, on the sympathy of those for whom it labours. Reproofs, sharp, unsparing, and pitiless, were familiar to his tongue and to his pen. Such a censure he had directed to the Archbishop of Mentz, which Spalatin, in the name of their common friend and sovereign, the Elector Frederic, implored him to suppress. "No," replied Luther, "in defence of the fold of Christ, I will oppose to the utmost of my power this ravening wolf, as I have resisted others. I send you my book, which was ready before your letter reached me. It has not induced me to alter a word. The question is decided, I cannot heed your objections." They were such, however, as most men would have thought reasonable enough. Here are some of the words of which neither friend nor sovereign could dissuade the publication. "Did you imagine that Luther was dead? Believe it not. He lives under the protection of that God who has already humbled the Pope, and is ready to begin with the Archbishop of Mentz a game for which few are prepared."

To the severe admonition which followed, the princely prelate answered in his own person, in terms of the most humble deference, leaving to Capito, his minister, the ticklish office of remonstrating against the rigour with which the lash had been applied. But neither soothing nor menaces could abate Luther's confidence in his cause and in himself. "Christianity," he replies, "is open and honest. It sees things as they are, and proclaims them as they are. I am for tearing off every mask, for managing nothing, for extenuating nothing, for shutting the eyes to nothing, that truth



may be transparent and unadulterated, and may have a free course. Think you that Luther is a man who is content to shut his eyes if you can but hush him by a few cajoleries?" "Expect everything from my affection; but reverence, nay tremble for the faith."

George, Duke of Saxony, the near kinsman of Frederic, and one of the most determined enemies of the Reformation, not seldom provoked and encountered the same resolute defiance. "Should God call me to Wittenburg, I would go there, though it should rain Duke Georges for nine days together, and each new Duke should be nine times more furious than this." "Though exposed daily to death in the midst of my enemies, and without any human resource, I never in my life despised anything so heartily as these stupid threats of Duke George, and his associates in folly. I write in the morning, fasting, with my heart filled with holy confidence. Christ lives and reigns, and I too shall live and reign."

Here is a more comprehensive denunciation of the futility of the attempts made to arrest his course.

"To the language of the Fathers of men, of angels, and of devils, I oppose neither antiquity nor numbers, but the single word of the Eternal Majesty, even that gospel which they are themselves compelled to acknowledge. Here is my hold, my stand, my resting-place, my glory, and my triumph. Hence I assault Popes, Thomists, Henrycists, Sophists, and all the gates of hell. I little heed the words of men, whatever may have been their sanctity, nor am I anxious about tradition or doubtful customs. The Word of God is above all. If the Divine Majesty be on my side, what care I for the rest, though a thousand Augustines, and a thousand Cyprians, and a thousand such churches as those of Henry, should rise against me? God can neither err nor deceive. Augustine, Cyprian, and all the saints, can err, and have erred."

"At Leipsie, at Augsburg, and at Worms, my spirit was as free as a flower of the field." "He whom God moves to speak, expresses himself openly and freely, careless whether he is alone or has others on his side. So spake Jeremiah, and I may boast of having done the same. God has not for the last thousand years bestowed on any bishop such great gifts as on me, and it is right that I should extol his gifts. Truly, I am indignant with myself that I do not heartily rejoice and give thanks. Now and then I raise a faint hymn of thanksgiving, and feebly praise Him. Well! live or die, *Domini sumus*. You may take the word either in the genitive or the nominative case. Therefore, Sir Doctor, be firm."

This buoyant spirit sometimes expressed itself in more pithy phrase. When he first wrote against indulgences, Dr. Jerome

Schurf said to him, "What are you about? — they won't allow it." "What if they *must* allow it?" was the peremptory answer.

The preceding passages, while they illustrate his indestructible confidence in himself as the minister, and in his cause as the best, of Heaven, are redolent of that unseemly violence and asperity which are attested at once by the regrets of his friends, the reproaches of his enemies, and his own acknowledgments. So fierce, indeed, and contumelious and withering is his invective, as to suggest the theory, that, in her successive transmigrations, the same fiery soul which in one age breathed "the Divine Philippics," and in another, the "Letters on a Regicide Peace," was lodged in the sixteenth century under the cowl of an Augustinian monk; retaining her indomitable energy of abuse, though condemned to a temporary divorce from her inspiring genius. Yet what she lost in eloquence in her transit from the Roman to the Irishman, this upbraiding spirit more than retrieved in generous and philanthropic ardour, while she dwelt in the bosom of the Saxon. Luther's rage, — for it is nothing less — his scurrilities, for they are no better — are at least the genuine language of passion, excited by a deep abhorrence of imposture, tyranny, and wrong. Through the ebullitions of his wrath may be discovered his lofty self-esteem, but not a single movement of puerile self-applause; his cordial scorn for fools and their folly, but not one heartless sarcasm; his burning indignation against oppressors, whether spiritual or secular, unclouded by so much as a passing shade of malignity. The torrent of emotion is headlong, but never turbulent. When we are least able to sympathise with his irascible feelings, it is also least in our power to refuse our admiration to a mind which, when thus torn up to its lowest depths, discloses no trace of envy, selfishness, or revenge, or of any still baser inmate. His mission from on high may be disputed, but hardly his own belief in it. In that persuasion, his thoughts often reverted to the Prophet of Israel mocking the idolatrous priests of Baal, and menacing their still more guilty King; and if the mantle of Elijah might have been borne with a more imposing majesty, it could not have fallen on one better prepared to pour contempt on the proudest enemies of truth, or to brave their utmost resentment.

Is it paradoxical to ascribe Luther's boisterous invective to his inherent reverence for all those persons and institutions, in favour of which wisdom, power, and rightful dominion are involuntarily presumed? He lived under the control of an imagination susceptible, though not creative — of that passive mental sense to which

it belongs to embrace, rather than to originate — to fix and deepen our more serious impressions, rather than to minister to the understanding in the search or the embellishment of truth. This propensity, the basis of religion itself in some, of loyalty in others, and of superstition perhaps in all, prepares the feeble for a willing servitude; and furnishes despotism with zealous instruments in men of stronger nerves and stouter hearts. It steeled Dominic and Loyola for their relentless tasks, and might have raised St. Martin of Wittemburg to the honours of canonisation; if, in designating him for his arduous office, Providence had not controlled the undue sensibility of Luther's mind, by imparting to him a brother's love for all the humbler members of the family of man, and a filial fear of God, stronger even than his reverence for the powers and principalities of this sublunary world. Between his religious affections and his homage for the idols of his imagination, he was agitated by a ceaseless conflict. The nice adjustment of such a balance ill suited his impatient and irritable temper; and he assaulted the objects of his early respect with an impetuosity which betrays his secret dread of those formidable antagonists (so he esteemed them) of God and of mankind. He could not trust himself to be moderate. The restraints of education, habit, and natural disposition, could be overborne only by the excitement which he courted and indulged. His long-cherished veneration for those who tread upon the high places of the earth, lent to his warfare with them all the energy of self-denial, quickened by the anxiety of self-distrust. He scourged his lordly adversaries in the spirit of a flagellant taming his own rebellious flesh. His youthful devotion for "the solemn plausibilities of life," like all other affections obstinately repelled and mortified, reversed its original tendency, and gave redoubled fervour to the zeal with which he denounced their vanity and resisted their usurpation.

If these indignant contumelies offended the gentle, the learned, and the wise, they sustained the courage and won the confidence of the multitude. The voice which commands in a tempest must battle with the roar of the elements. In his own apprehension at least, Luther's soul was among lions — the Princes of Germany and their ministers; Henry the Eighth and Edward Lee, his chaplain; the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists; the Universities of Cologne and Louvain; Charles and Leo; Adrian and Clement; Papists, Jurists, and Aristotelians; and, above all, the devils whom his creeds assigned to each of these formidable opponents as so many inspiring or ministering spirits. However fierce and indefensible may be his occasional style, history presents no more sublime picture than that of the humble monk triumphing

over such adversaries, in the invincible power of a faith before which the present and the visible disappeared, to make way for things unseen, eternal, and remote. One brave spirit encountered and subdued a hostile world. An intellect of no gigantic proportions, seconded by learning of no marvellous compass, and gifted with no rare or exquisite abilities, but invincible in decision and constancy of purpose, advanced to the accomplishment of one great design, with a continually increasing *momentum*, before which all feebler minds retired, and all opposition was dissipated. The majesty of the contest, and the splendour of the results, may, perhaps, even in our fastidious and delicate age, be received as an apology for such reproofs as the following to the Royal "Defender of the Faith."

"There is much royal ignorance in this volume, but there is also much virulence and falsehood, which belongs to Lee the editor. In the cause of Christ I have trampled under foot the idol of the Roman abomination which had usurped the place of God and the dominion of sovereigns and of the world. Who, then, is this Henry, this new Thomist, this disciple of the monster, that I should dread his blasphemies and his fury? Truly he is the Defender of the Church! Yes, of that Church of his which he thus extols — of that prostitute who is clothed in purple, drunk with her debaucheries — of that mother of fornications. Christ is my leader. I will strike with the same blow that Church and the defender with whom she has formed this strict union. They have challenged me to war. Well, they shall have war. They have scorned the peace I offered them. Well, they shall have no more peace. It shall be seen which will first be weary — the Pope or Luther." — "The world is gone mad. There are the Hungarians, assuming the character of defenders of God himself. They pray in their litanies, *ut nos defensores tuos exaudire digneris* — why do not some of our princes take on them the protection of Jesus Christ, others that of the Holy Spirit? Then, indeed, the Divine Trinity would be well guarded."

The Briefs of Pope Adrian are thus disposed of: — "It is mortifying to be obliged to give such good German in answer to this wretched kitchen Latin. But it is the pleasure of God to confound anti-Christ in everything — to leave him neither literature nor language. They say that he has gone mad, and fallen into dotage. It is a shame to address us Germans in such Latin as this, and to send to sensible people such a clumsy and absurd interpretation of Scripture."

The Bulls of Pope Clement fare no better. "The Pope tells us in his answer that he is willing to throw open the golden doors. It



is long since we opened all our doors in Germany. But these Italian Scaramouches have never restored a farthing of the gain they have made by their indulgences, dispensations, and other diabolical inventions. Good Pope Clement, all your clemency and gentleness won't pass here. We'll buy no more indulgences. Golden doors and bulls, get ye home again. Look to the Italians for payment. They who know ye will buy you no more. Thanks be to God, we know that they who possess and believe the Gospel, enjoy an uninterrupted jubilee. Excellent Pope, what care we for your bulls? You may save your seals and your parchment. They are in bad odour now-a-days."—"Let them accuse me of too much violence. I care not. Hereafter be it my glory that men shall tell how I inveighed and raged against the Papists. For the last ten years have I been humbling myself, and addressing them in none but respectful language. What has been the consequence of all this submission? To make bad worse. These people are but the more furious. Well, since they are incorrigible, as it is vain to hope to shake their infernal purposes by kindness, I will break with them, I will pursue them," &c. — "Such is my contempt for these Satans, that were I not confined here, I would go straight to Rome, in spite of the devil and all these furies. But," he continues, in a more playful mood, "I must have patience with the Pope, with my boarders, my servants, with Catherine de Bora, and with everybody else. In short, I live a life of patience."

At the risk of unduly multiplying these quotations, we must add another, which has been quoted triumphantly by his enemies. It is his answer to the charge of mistranslating the Bible. "The ears of the Papists are too long with their hi! ha! — they are unable to criticise a translation from Latin into German. Tell them that Dr. Martin Luther chooses that it shall be so; and that a Papist and a jackass are the same."

We should reprint no small portion of Luther's works before we exhausted the examples which might be drawn from them, of the uproar with which he assailed his antagonists. To the reproaches which this violence drew on him, he rarely condescended to reply. But to his best and most powerful friend, the Elector Frederic, he makes a defence, in which there is some truth and more eloquence. "They say that these books of mine are too keen and cutting. They are right; I never meant them to be soft and gentle. My only regret is, that they cut no deeper. Think of the violence of my enemies, and you must confess that I have been too forbearing." — "All the world exclaims against me, vociferating the most hateful calumnies; and if, in my return, I, poor man, raise my voice, then nobody has been vehement but Luther. In fine, whatever I

do or say must be wrong, even should I raise the dead. Whatever they do must be right, even should they deluge Germany with tears and blood." In his more familiar discourse, he gave another, and perhaps a more accurate account of the real motives of his impetuosity. He purposely fanned the flame of an indignation which he thought virtuous, because the origin of it was so. "I never," he said, "write or speak so well as when I am in a passion." He found anger an effectual, and at last a necessary stimulant, and indulged in a liberal or rather in an intemperate use of it.

The tempestuous phase of Luther's mind was not, however, permanent. The wane of it may be traced in his later writings; and the cause may be readily assigned. The liberator of the human mind was soon to discover that the powers he had set free were not subject to his control. The Iconoclasts, Anabaptists, and other innovators, however welcome at first, as useful, though irregular, partisans, brought an early discredit on the victory to which they had contributed. The Reformer's suspicion of these doubtful allies was first awakened by the facility with which they urged their conquests over the established opinions of the Christian world beyond the limits at which he had himself paused. He looked with distrust on their exemption from the pangs and throes with which the birth of his own doctrines had been accompanied in his own bosom. He perceived in them none of the caution, self-distrust, and humility, which he wisely judged inseparable from the honest pursuit of truth. Their claims to an immediate intercourse with heaven appeared to him an impious pretension; for he judged that it is only as attempered through many a gross intervening medium, that Divine light can be received at all into the human understanding.

Carlostadt, one of the professors at Wittemberg, was the leader of the Illuminati at that university. The influence of Luther procured his expulsion to Jena, where he established a printing-press. But the maxims of toleration are not taught in the school of successful polemics; and the secular arm was invoked to silence an appeal to the world at large against a new papal authority. The debate from which Luther thus excluded others he could not deny to himself; for he shrunk from no inquiry and dreaded no man's prowess. A controversial passage at arms accordingly took place between the Reformer and his refractory pupil. It is needless to add that they separated, each more firmly convinced of the errors of his opponent. The taunt of fearing an open encounter with truth, Luther repelled with indignation and spirit. He invited Carlostadt to publish freely whatever he thought fit, and the chal-

lence being accepted, he placed in his hands a florin, as a kind of wager of battle. It was received with equal frankness. The combatants grasped each other's hands, drank mutual pledges in a solemn cup, and parted to engage in hostilities more serious than such greetings might have seemed to augur. Luther had the spirit of a martyr, and was not quite exempt from that of a persecutor. Driven from one city to another, Carlostadt at last found refuge at Basle; and thence assailed his adversary with a rapid succession of pamphlets, and with such pleasing appellatives as "twofold papist," "ally of anti-Christ," and so forth. They were answered with equal fertility, and with no greater moderation. "The devil," says Luther, "held his tongue till I won him over with a florin. It was money well laid out. I do not regret it."

He now advocated the cause of social order, and exposed the dangers of ignorant innovators, assailing these new enemies with his old weapons. "It will never do to jest with Mr. All-the-World (*Herr omnes*). To keep that formidable person quiet, God has established lawful authority. It is His pleasure that there should be order amongst us here." "They cry out, The Bible! the Bible!—Bibel! Bubel! Babel!"

From that sacred source many arguments had been drawn to prove that all good Christians were bound, in imitation of the great Jewish lawgiver, to overthrow and deface the statues with which the Papists had embellished the sacred edifices. Luther strenuously resisted both the opinion and the practice; maintaining that the Scriptures nowhere prohibit the use of images, except such as were designed as a representation or symbol of Deity.

But to the war with objects designed (however injudiciously) to aid the imagination, and to enliven the affections, Carlostadt and his partisans united that mysticism which teaches that the mind, thus deprived of all external and sensible supports, should raise itself to a height of spiritual contemplation and repose, where, all other objects being banished, and all other sounds unheard, and all other thoughts expelled, the Divine Being will directly manifest himself, and disclose His will by a voice silent and inarticulate, and yet distinctly intelligible. Luther handles this sublime nonsense as it well deserved. "The devil," he says (for this is his universal solvent), "opens his large mouth, and roars out, Spirit! spirit! spirit! destroying the while all roads, bridges, scaling ladders, and paths, by which spirit can enter; namely, the visible order established by God in holy baptism, in outward forms, and in His own word. They would have you mount the clouds and ride the winds, telling you neither how, nor when, nor where, nor which. All this they leave you to discover for yourself."

Carlostadt was an image breaker and a mystic, but he was something more. He had adopted the opinion of Zuingle and Œcolampadius on the Holy Communion,—receiving as an emblem, and as nothing else, the sacred elements in which the Roman Catholic Church, after the words of consecration, recognises the very body and blood of the Divine Redeemer. He was, therefore, supported by the whole body of Swiss reformers. Luther, “chained down,” as he expresses it, “by the sacred text,” to the doctrine of the real presence, had ardently desired to be enfranchised from this opinion. “As often as he felt within himself the strivings of the old Adam, he was but too violently drawn to adopt the Swiss interpretation.” “But if we take counsel with reason, we shall no longer believe any mystery.” He had, however, consulted this dangerous guide too long, thus easily to shake off her company. The text taught him one real presence, his reason assured him of another; and so he required his disciples to admit and believe both. They obeyed, though at the expense of a schism among the Reformers, of which it is difficult to say whether it occasioned more distress to themselves, or more exultation to their common enemies.

This is the first and greatest of those “Variations” of which the history has been written with such inimitable eloquence. Nothing short of the most obtuse prejudice could deny to Bossuet the praise of having brought to religious controversy every quality which can render it either formidable or attractive;—a style of such transparent perspicuity as would impart delight to the study of the Year Books, if they could be rewritten in it; a sagacity which nothing escapes; and a fervour of thought and feeling so intense, as to breathe and burn not only without the use of vehement or opprobrious words, but through a diction invariably calm and simple; and a mass of learning so vast and so perfectly digested as to be visible everywhere without producing the slightest encumbrance or embarrassment. To quote from Mr. Hallam’s History of the Middle Ages:—“Nothing, perhaps, in polemical eloquence is so splendid as the chapter on Luther’s theological tenets. The Eagle of Meaux is there truly seen, lordly of form, fierce of eye, terrible in his beak and claws,”—a graphic and not unmerited tribute to the prowess of this formidable adversary. But the triumph which it appears to concede to him may not be so readily acknowledged.

The argument of the “Variations” rests on the postulate, that a religion of Divine origin must have provided some resource for excluding uncertainty on every debatable point of belief or practice. Now, it must be vain to search for this steadfast light amongst those who were at variance on so many vital questions.



The required *Ductor Dubitantium* could, therefore, be found only in the venerable form of the Catholic Church, whose oracles, everywhere accessible and never silent, had, from age to age, delivered to the faithful the same invariable truths in one continuous strain of perfect and unbroken harmony.

Much as the real contrast has been exaggerated by the most subtle disputant of modern times, it would be futile to deny, or to extenuate the glaring inconsistencies of the Reformers with each other, and with themselves. Protestantism may well endure an avowal which leaves her foundations unimpaired. Bossuet has disproved the existence of a miracle which no one alleges. He has incontrovertibly established that the laws of nature were *not* suspended in favour of Luther and his associates. He has shown, with inimitable address and eloquence, that, within the precincts of moral science, human reason must toil in vain for demonstrative certainties; and that, in such studies, they who would adopt the same general results, and co-operate for one common end, must be content to rest very far short of an absolute identity of opinion.

But there is a deep and impassable gulf between these premises and the inference deduced from them. The stupendous miracle of a traditional unanimity for fifteen hundred years amongst the members of the Christian Church, at once unattested by any authentic evidence, and refuted by irresistible proofs, is opposed as much to the whole economy of the moral government of the world, as it is to human experience. It was, indeed, easy to silence dissent by terror; to disguise real differences beneath conventional symbols; to divert the attention of the incurious by a gorgeous pageantry; and to disarm the inquisitive at one time by golden preferments, and at another by specious compromises: and it was easy to allege this timid, or blind, or selfish acquiescence in spiritual despotism, as a general consent to the authority, and as a spontaneous adoption of the tenets, of the dominant priesthood. But so soon as men really began to think, it was impossible that they should think alike. When suffrages were demanded, and not acclamations, there was at once an end of unanimity. With mental freedom came doubt, and debate, and sharp dissension. The indispensable conditions of human improvement were now to be fulfilled. It was discovered that religious knowledge, like all other knowledge, and religious agreement, like all other agreement, were blessings which, like all other blessings, must be purchased at a price.

Luther dispelled the illusion that man's noblest science may be attained, his first interests secured, and his most sacred duties discharged, except in the strenuous exercise of the best faculties of

his nature. He was early taught that they who submit themselves to this Divine ordinance, are cut off from the intellectual repose which rewards a prostrate submission to human authority; that they must conduct the search of truth through many a bitter disappointment, and many a humiliating retractation, and many a weary strife; and that they must brace their nerves and strain their mental powers to the task, with sleepless diligence,—attended and sustained the while by singleness of purpose, by candour, by hope, by humility, and by devotion. When this severe lesson had been learned, the Reformers boldly, nay, passionately, avowed their mutual differences. The imperfect vision, and unsteady gait, of eyes long excluded from the light, and of limbs long debarred from exercise, drew on them the taunts and contumelies of those whose bondage they had dared to reject. But the sarcasms even of Erasmus, the eloquence even of Bossuet, were impotent against such antagonists. Centuries rolled on their appointed course of controversy, of prejudice, of persecution, and of long-suffering. Nor was that sharp conflict endured in vain. Slowly, indeed, but steadfastly, the Catholic and benignant spirit of the Gospel reappeared, and resumed its influence in the Christian world. The rights of conscience, and the principles of toleration, were acknowledged. Some vehement disputes were consigned to well-merited neglect. The Church of Rome herself silently adopted much of the temper, whilst anathematising the tenets of the Reformers; and if the dominion of peace and charity be still imperfect and precarious, yet there is a brighter prospect of their universal empire than has ever before dawned on the nations of Christendom. The Eagle of Meaux, had he been reserved for the nineteenth century, would have laid aside “the terrors of his beak, the lightnings of his eye,” and would have winged his lordly flight to regions elevated far above those over which it is his glory to have spread war and consternation.

These, however, are conclusions which, in Luther’s age, were beyond the reach of human foresight. It was at that time supposed that all men might at once freely discuss, and unanimously interpret, the meaning of the inspired volume. The trial of the experiment brought to light many essential variations, but still more in which the verbal exceeded the real difference; and such was, perhaps, the case with the Sacramentarian controversy. The objection to Luther’s doctrine of Consubstantiation, was not that it was opposed to the reason of man, nor even that it was contradicted by the evidence of his senses; but that no intelligible meaning could be assigned to any of the combinations of words in which it was expressed. It might be no difficult

task to be persuaded that whatever so great a doctor taught, on so high a point of theology, must be a truth;—just as the believers in George Psalmanazer may have been firmly assured of the verity of the statements he addressed to them in the language of Formosa. But the Lutheran doctrine could hardly have been more obscure, if it had been delivered in the Formosan, instead of the Latin or the German tongue. To all common apprehension, it appeared nothing less than the simultaneous affirmation and denial of the very same thing. In this respect it closely resembled the kindred doctrine of the Church of Rome. Yet who would indulge in so presumptuous a bigotry as to impute to the long unbroken succession of powerful and astute minds which have adorned the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches, the extravagance of having substituted unmeaning sounds for a definite sense, on so momentous an article of their respective creeds? The consequence may be avoided by a much more rational supposition. It is, that the learned of both communions used the words in which that article is enounced, in a sense widely remote from that which they usually bear. The proof of this hypothesis would be more easy than attractive; nor would it be a difficult, though an equally uninviting office, to show that Zuingle and his followers indulged themselves in a corresponding freedom with human language. The dispute, however, proceeded too rapidly to be overtaken or arrested by definitions; which, had they preceded, instead of following the controversy, might have stifled in its birth many a goodly folio.

The minds of men were rudely called away from these subtleties. Throughout the west of Germany, the peasants rose in a sudden and desperate revolt against their lords, under the guidance of Goetz of the “Iron Hand.” If neither animated by the principles, nor guided by the precepts of the Gospel, the insurgents at least avowed their adherence to the party then called Evangelical, and justified their conduct by an appeal to the doctrines of the Reformers. Yet this fearful disruption of the bands of society was provoked neither by speculative opinions, nor by imaginary wrongs. The grievances of the people were galling, palpable, and severe. They belonged to that class of social evils over which the advancing light of truth and knowledge must always triumph, either by prompting timely concessions, or by provoking the rebound of the overstrained patience of mankind. Domestic slavery, feudal tenures, oppressive taxation, and a systematic denial of justice to the poor, occupied the first place in their catalogue of injuries; the forest laws and the exaction of small tithes, the second. The demand of the right to choose their own religious teachers, may not improbably

have been added, to give to their cause the semblance of a less sub-lunary character; and rather in compliment to the spirit of the times, than from any very lively desire for instructors, who, they well knew, would discourage and rebuke their lawless violence.

Such a monitor was Luther. He was at once too conspicuous and too ardent to remain a passive spectator of these tumults. The nobles arraigned him as the author of their calamities. The people invoked him as an arbiter in the dispute. He answered their appeal with more than papal dignity. A poor untitled priest asserted over the national mind of Germany a command more absolute than that of her thousand Princes and their Imperial head. He had little of the science of government, nor, in truth, of any other science. But his mind had been expanded by studies which give wisdom even to the simple. His understanding was invigorated by habitual converse with the inspired writings, and his soul had drunk deeply of their spirit. And therefore it was that from him Europe first heard those great social maxims which, though they now pass for elementary truths, were then as strange in theory as they were unknown in practice. He fearlessly maintained that the demands of the insurgents were just. He asserted the all-important though obvious truth, that power is confided to the rulers of mankind, not to gratify their caprice or selfishness, but as a sacred trust to be employed for the common good of society at large; and he denounced their injustice and rapacity with the same stern vehemence which he had formerly directed against the spiritual tyrants of the world.

For, in common with all who have caught the genius as well as the creed of Christianity, the readiest sympathies of Luther were with the poor, the destitute, and the oppressed; and, in contemplating the unequal distribution of the good things of life, he was not slowly roused to a generous indignation against those to whom the advantages of fortune had taught neither pity nor forbearance. But it was an emotion restrained and directed by far deeper thoughts than visit the minds of sentimental patriots, or selfish demagogues. He depicted, in his own ardent and homely phrase, the guilt, the folly, and the miseries of civil war. He reminded the people of their ignorance and their faults. He bade them not to divert their attention from these, to scan the errors of their superiors. He drew from the evangelical precepts of patience, meekness, and long-suffering, every motive which could calm their agitated passions. He implored them not to dishonour the religion they professed; and showed that subordination in human society was a Divine ordinance, designed to promote, in different ways, the moral improvement of every rank, and the general happiness of all.



The authority, the courage, and the pathetic earnestness of the great Reformer were exerted in vain. Oppression which drives wise men mad, had closed the ears of the German peasantry to the advice even of Martin Luther; and they plunged into a contest more desperate in its character, and more fatal in its results, than any which stains the annals of the empire. He felt, with the utmost keenness, the reproach thus brought on the Reformation; nor may it be concealed, that at last his voice was raised in terrible indignation against the insurgents, by whom his pacific efforts had been defeated and his remonstrances despised. His old antagonist, Carlostadt, was charged with a guilty participation in the revolt, and in his distress appealed to the much-reviled Consubstantialist for protection. It was hardly in human nature, certainly not in Luther's, to reject such a suppliant. The *odium theologicum* is, after all, rather a vituperative than a malignant affection, even its worst type; and Luther possessed, more than most polemics, the faculty of expelling from the soul the Demon of Wrath through the channel of the pen. He placed Carlostadt in safety, defended him from the charge of fostering rebellion, and demanded for him a fair trial and a patient hearing. His preternatural fate has been already noticed.

But a more formidable enemy was at hand. The supremacy of Erasmus in the world of letters was such as no other writer ever lived to enjoy. Literature had then an universal language, and the learned of all nations acknowledged him as their guide and model. In an age of intense mental activity, no other mind was so impatient of repose; at a period when freedom of thought was asserted with all the enthusiasm of new-born hope, he emulated the most sanguine of the insurgents against the ancient dynasties. The restorer, almost the inventor, of the popular interpretation of the Scriptures, he was excelled by few, if any, in the more ambitious science of biblical criticism. His philosophy (if, in deference to custom, it must so be called) was but the application to those inquiries in which the present and future welfare of mankind is chiefly involved, of an admirable good sense, which penetrated sophisms under the most specious disguise, and repelled mere verbal subtleties, however imposing their pretensions, or however illustrious their patrons. Alternately a man of the world, and a recluse scholar, he was ever wide awake to the real business of life; even when engaged in those studies which usually conduct the mere prisoners of the cloister into dreamy and transcendental speculations. In his hands, the Latin language was bent to uses of which Cicero himself might have thought it incapable; and, without any barbarous innovations, became, almost for the first time,

the vehicle of playful banter, and of high and mysterious doctrines, treated in a familiar and easy tone.

Of the two imperial virtues, industry and self-denial, the literary character of Erasmus was adorned by the first much more than by the second. Grasping at universal excellence and immediate renown, he poured out orations, verses, essays, dialogues, aphorisms, biographies, translations, and new editions of the classical writers, with a rapidity which at once dazzled the world, and exhausted himself. Deeply as the impress of his mind was fastened on his own generation, those only of his countless works retain their charm in later times which he regarded but as the pastime of a few leisure hours. Every one has read the "Colloquies," and admired their gay and graceful exposure of the frauds and credulity of his age. The "Praise of Folly" should never be separated from Holbein's etchings, without which the reader may now and then smile, but will hardly laugh. The "Ciceronianus" is one of those elaborate pleasantries which give pleasure only to the laborious. For neither as a wit, nor as a theologian, nor perhaps even as a critic, does Erasmus rank among master intellects; and in the other departments of Literature no one has ventured to claim for him a very elevated station. His real glory is to have opened at once new channels of popular and of abstruse knowledge—to have guided the few, while he instructed the many—to have lived and written for noble ends—to have been surpassed by none in the compass of his learning, or the collective value of his works—and to have prepared the way for a mighty revolution, which it required moral qualities far loftier than his to accomplish.

For the soul of this great man did not partake of the energy of his intellectual faculties. He repeatedly confesses that he had none of the spirit of a martyr; and the acknowledgment is made in the tone of sarcasm, rather than in that of regret. He belonged to that class of actors on the scene of life, who have always appeared as the harbingers of great social changes;—men gifted with the power to discern, and the hardihood to proclaim, truths of which they want the courage to encounter the infallible results; who outrun their generation in thought, but lag behind it in action; players at the sport of reform so long as reform itself appears at an indefinite distance; more ostentatious of their mental superiority than anxious for the well-being of mankind; dreaming that the dark page of history may hereafter become a fairy tale, in which enchantment will bring to pass a glorious catastrophe, unbought by intervening strife, and agony, and suffering; and therefore overwhelmed with alarm when the edifice begins to totter, of which their own hands have sapped the foundation.

He was a Reformer, until the Reformation became a fearful reality;—a jester at the bulwarks of the papacy, until they began to give way;—a propagator of the Scriptures, until men betook themselves to the study and the application of them;—depreciating the mere outward forms of religion, until they had come to be estimated at their real value;—in short, a learned, ingenious, benevolent, amiable, timid, irresolute man, who, though compelled to bear the responsibility, resigned to others the glory, of rescuing the human mind from the bondage of a thousand years. The distance between his career and that of Luther was, therefore, continually enlarging, until they at length moved in opposite directions, and met each other with mutual animosity. The Reformer foresaw and deprecated this collision: and Bossuet has condemned as servile the celebrated letter in which Luther endeavoured to avert the impending contest. In common with many of his censures of the great father of the Protestant Churches, this is evidently the result of prejudice. The letter was conceived with tenderness, and expressed with becoming dignity.

“I do not,” he says, “reproach you in your estrangements from us, fearing lest I should hinder the cause which you maintain against our common enemies the Papists. For the same reason, it gives me no displeasure that, in many of your works, you have sought to obtain their favour, or to appease their hostility, by assailing us with undeserved reproaches and sarcasms. It is obvious that God has not given you the energy or the courage requisite for an open and fearless attack on these monsters, nor am I of a temper to exact from you what is beyond your strength.”—“I have respected your infirmity, and that measure of the gifts of God which is in you. None can deny that you have promoted the cause of literature, thus opening the way to the right understanding of the Scriptures: or that the endowment which you have thus received from God is magnificent and worthy of all admiration. Here is a just cause for gratitude. I have never desired that you should quit your cautious and measured course to enter our camp. Great are the services you render by your genius and eloquence; and as your heart fails you, it is best that you should serve God with such powers as He has given you. My only apprehension is, lest you should permit yourself to be dragged by our enemies to publish an attack upon our doctrines, for then I should be compelled to resist you to the face.”—“Things have now reached a point at which we should feel no anxiety for our cause, even though Erasmus himself should direct all his abilities against us. It is no wonder that our party should be impatient of your attacks. Human weakness is alarmed and oppressed by the weight of the name of Erasmus. Once

to be lashed by Erasmus is a far different thing from being exposed to the assaults of all the Papists put together.”—“I have written all this in proof of my candour, and because I desire that God may impart to you a spirit worthy of your name. If that spirit be withheld, at least let me implore you to remain a mere spectator of our tragedy. Do not join your forces to our enemies. Abstain from writing against me, and I will write nothing against you.”

This lofty tone grated on the fastidious ear of the monarch of literature. He watched his opportunity, and inflicted a terrible revenge. To have attacked the doctrines of the Reformation would have been to hazard an unanswerable charge of inconsistency. But Luther, in exploring his path, had lost his way in the labyrinth of the question of free-will: and had published opinions which were nothing short of the avowal of absolute fatalism. In a treatise *De Libero Arbitrio*, Erasmus made a brilliant charge on this exposed part of his adversary's position; exhausting all the resources of his sagacity, wit, and learning, to lower the theological character of the founder of the Lutheran Church. The Reformer staggered beneath this blow. For metaphysical debate he was ill prepared — to the learning of his antagonist he had no pretension — and to his wit could oppose nothing but indignant vehemence. His answer, *De Servo Arbitrio*, has been confessed, by his most ardent admirers, to have been but a feeble defence to his formidable enemy. The temper in which he conducted the dispute may be judged from the following example: “Erasmus, that king of amphibology, reposes calmly on his amphibological throne, cheats us with his ambiguous language, and claps his hands when he finds us entangled amongst his insidious tropes, like beasts of chase fallen into the toils. Then seizing the occasion for his rhetoric, he springs on his captive with loud cries, tearing, scourging, tormenting, and devoting you to the infernals, because, as it pleases him to say, his words have been understood in a calumnious, scandalous, and Satanic sense, though it was his own design that they should be so taken. See him come on, creeping like a viper,” &c. &c.

To the last, the sense of this defeat would appear to have clung to Luther. Accustomed to triumph in theological debate, he had been overthrown in the presence of abashed friends and exulting enemies; and the record of his familiar conversation bears deep traces of his keen remembrance of this humiliation. Many of the contumelious words ascribed to him on this subject, if they really fell from his lips, were probably some of those careless expressions in which most men indulge in the confidence of private life; and which, when quoted with the most literal exactness, assume in books published for the perusal of the world at large, a new mean-



ing, and an undesigned emphasis. But there is little difficulty in receiving as authentic the words he is said to have pronounced when gazing on the picture of Erasmus — that it was, like himself, full of craft and malice; a comment on the countenance of that illustrious scholar, as depicted by Holbein, from which it is impossible altogether to dissent.

The contest with Erasmus and the Sacramentarians had taken place in that debatable land which religion and philosophy each claim for her own. But Luther was now to oppose a revolt not merely against philosophy and religion, but against decency and common sense. Equally astounding and scandalous were the antics which the minds of men performed when, exempt from the control of their ancient prepossessions, they had not as yet been brought into subjection to any other. Throughout the north of Germany and the Netherlands, there were found many converts to the belief, that a divorce might be effected between the virtues which the Gospel exacts, and those new relations between man and the Author of his being, which it at once creates and reveals; that, in short, it was possible to be at the same time a Christian and a knave. The connection between this sottish delirium and the rejection of infant baptism was an accident, or at most a caprice; and the name of Anabaptists, afterwards borne by so many wise and good men, is unfortunately, though indelibly, associated with the crazy rabble who first assumed or received it at Munster.

Herman Shapcroda, and after him Rothmann, were the first who instructed the inhabitants of that city in these ill-omened novelties; and they quickly gained the authority which any bold and unscrupulous guide may command, in times when hereditary creeds have been abandoned by those who want the capacity or the knowledge to shape out new opinions for themselves. “He who has not received adult baptism” (such was their argument) “is not a Christian; he who is not a Christian is an enemy of the truth; and it is the duty of the faithful to oppose the enemies of truth by all arms, spiritual or secular, within their reach.”

Strong in this reasoning, and stronger still in numbers and in zeal, the Anabaptists of Munster declared open war against the Bishop, expelled the Catholics and Lutherans from the city, pillaged the churches and convents, and adopted as their watch-word the exhortation to repent, with which the Baptist of old had addressed the multitudes who surrounded him in the wilderness of Judæa.

If the insurgents did no works meet for repentance, they did many to be bitterly repented of. Their success was accompanied by cruelty, and followed by still fouler crimes. John de Mattheisson, their chief prophet, established a community of goods, and

committed to the flames every book except the Bible. John of Leyden, his successor, was a journeyman tailor, and, though at once a rogue and a fanatic, was not without some qualities which might have adorned a better cause. He conducted the defence of the city against the Bishop with as much skill and gallantry as if his accustomed seat had been, not the shop-board, but the saddle of a belted knight.

In the Scriptures, which his predecessor had exempted from the general conflagration, John found a sanction for the plurality of wives, and proofs that the sceptre of David had passed into his own hands. Twelve princes, representing the heads of the tribes of Israel, received from him authority to ascend the thrones of Europe; and apostles were sent to the great cities of Germany to propagate the new faith, and to attest the miracles of which they had been the witnesses. The doctrine they taught was less abstruse than might have been anticipated. It consisted in these propositions:—There have been four prophets: the true are King David and King John of Leyden; the false are the Pope and Martin Luther: but Luther is worse than the Pope.

While this pithy creed was inculcated without the walls, the most frightful debaucheries, and a strange burlesque on royalty, went on within. The king paraded the city, attended by his queen, and followed by a long train of led horses, caparisoned in gold brocade, a drawn sword being borne at his left hand, and a crown and Bible at his right. Seated on a throne in the public square, he received petitions from supplicants prostrate on the earth before him. Then followed impious parodies on the most sacred offices of the Christian worship, and scenes of profligacy which may not be described. To these, ere long, succeeded horrors which rendered the New Jerusalem no inapt antitype of the old. The conquered king expiated his crimes on the scaffold,—enduring protracted and inhuman torments with a firmness which redeems his character from the abhorrence to which it had so many indisputable titles.

The story, however offensive, is not without interest. The rapidity with which the contagion of such stupid extravagances was propagated, and the apparent genuineness of the belief which a man of much fortitude and some acuteness at length yielded to the coinage of his own brain, are still curious, though not unfrequent, phenomena in the science of mental nosology. From his answers to the interrogatories which were proposed to him on his trial, it may be inferred that he was perfectly sane. His mind had been bewildered, partly by a depraved imagination and ungoverned appetites, and partly by his encounter with questions too large for

his capacity, and with detached sentences from Holy Writ, of which he perceived neither the obvious sense nor the more sublime intimations. The memory of this guilty, presumptuous, and unhappy man, is rescued from oblivion by the audacity of his enterprise, and still more by the influence it exerted in arresting the progress of the Reformation.

The reproach, however unmerited, fell heavily on Luther. It is the common fate of all who dare to become leaders in the war against abuses, whether in religious or in political society, to be confounded with the baser sort of innovators, who at once hate their persons, and exaggerate and caricature the principles on which they have acted. For this penalty of rendering eminent services to the world every wise man is prepared; and every brave man endures it firmly, in the belief that a day is coming when his fame will be no longer oppressed by this unworthy association. Luther's faith in the ultimate deliverance of his good name from the obloquy cast on it by the madness of the Anabaptists, has but imperfectly been justified by the event. Long after his name belonged to the brightest page of human history, it found in Bossuet an antagonist as inveterate as Tetzels, more learned than Cajetan, and surpassing Erasmus himself in eloquence and ingenuity. Later still has arisen, in the person of Mr. Hallam, a censor, whose religious opinions, unquestionable integrity, boundless knowledge, and admirable genius, give a fearful weight to his unfavourable judgment of the Father of the Reformation. Neither of these great writers, indeed, countenances the vulgar calumny which would identify the principles of Martin Luther with those of John of Leyden, although both of them arraign him in nearly the same terms, as having adopted and taught the Antinomian doctrines of which the Anabaptists exhibited the practical results.

The course we are shaping having brought us within reach of the whirlpools of this interminable controversy, roaring in endless circles over a dark and bottomless abyss, we cannot altogether yield to that natural impulse which would pass them by in cautious silence and with averted eyes. The *Labarum* of Luther was a banner inscribed with the legend "Justification by Faith" — the compendium, the essence, the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, of his distinctive creed. Of the many received or possible interpretations of this enigmatical symbol, that which Bossuet and Mr. Hallam regard as most accordant with the views of the great standard-bearer himself, may be stated in the following terms: — If a man be firmly assured that his sins have been remitted by God, in the exercise of a mercy gratuitous and unmerited as its respects the offender himself, but accorded as the merited reward of the great

propitiation, that man stands within the line which, even in this life, separates the objects of the Divine favour from the objects of the Divine displeasure. We believe this epitome of the Lutheran doctrine to be inaccurate, and, but for the greatness of the names by which it is sanctioned, we should have ventured to add superficial. In hazarding a different translation of Luther's meaning into the language of the world we live in, we do but oppose one assertion to another, leaving the whole weight of authority on the unfavourable side. The appeal ultimately lies to those whose studies have rendered them familiar with the Reformer's writings, and especially with his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," which he was wont affectionately to call his Catherine de Bora. It must be conceded that they abound in expressions which, detached from the mass, would more than justify the censure of the historian of the "Literature of the Middle Ages." But no writer would be less fairly judged than Luther by isolated passages. Too impetuous to pause for exact discrimination, too long entangled in scholastic learning to have ever entirely recovered the natural relish for plain common sense, and compelled habitually to move in that turbid polemical region which pure and unrefracted light never visits, Luther, it must be confessed, is intelligible only to the impartial and laborious, and might almost be supposed to have courted those reproaches which he least deserves. Stripped of the technicalities of divinity and of the schools, his *Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesie* may, perhaps, with no material error, be thus explained.

Define the word "conviction" as a deliberate assent to the truth of any statement, and the word "persuasion" as the habitual reference to any such truth (real or supposed), as a rule of conduct; and it follows, that we are "persuaded" of many things of which we are not "convinced:" which is credulity or superstition. Thus, Cicero was "persuaded" of the sanctity of the mysteries which he celebrated as one of the College of Augurs. But the author of the Treatise *De Naturâ Deorum* had certainly no corresponding "convictions." We are "convinced" of much of which we are not "persuaded;" which, in theological language, is a "dead faith." The Marquis of Worcester deliberately assented to the truth, that the expansive force of steam could be applied to propel a vessel through the water; but wanting the necessary "persuasion," he left to others the praise of the discovery. Again, there are many propositions of which we are at once "convinced" and "persuaded," and this in the Lutheran style is a "living or saving faith." In this sense Columbus believed the true configuration of the earth, and launched his caravels to make known the two hemispheres to



each other. It is by the aid of successful experiment engendering confidence; of habit producing facility; and of earnest thoughts quickening the imagination and kindling desire, that our opinions thus ripen into motives, and our theoretical 'convictions' into active 'persuasions.' It is, therefore, nothing else than a contradiction in terms to speak of Christian faith as separable from moral virtue. The practical results of that, as of any other, motive, will vary directly as the intensity of the impulse, and inversely as the number and force of the impediments; but a motive which produces no motion, is the same thing as an attraction which does not draw, or as a propensity which does not incline. Far different as was the style in which Luther enounced his doctrine, the careful study of his writings will, we think, convince any dispassionate man that such was his real meaning. The faith of which he wrote was not a mere opinion, or a mere emotion. It was a mental energy, of slow but stately growth, of which an intellectual assent was the basis; high and holy tendencies the lofty superstructure; and a virtuous life the inevitable use and destination. In his own emphatic words: — 'We do not say the sun *ought* to shine, a good tree *ought* to produce good fruit, seven and three *ought* to make ten. The sun shines by its own proper nature, without being bidden to do so; in the same manner the good tree yields its good fruit; seven and three have made ten from everlasting — it is needless to require them to do so hereafter.'

If any credit be due to his great antagonist, Luther's doctrine of 'Justification,' when thus understood, is not entitled to the praise or the censure of novelty. Bossuet resents this claim as injurious to the Church of Rome, and as founded on an extravagant misrepresentation of her real doctrines. To ascribe to the great and wise men of whom she justly boasts, or, indeed, to attribute to any one of sound mind the dogma or the dream which would deliberately transfer the ideas of the market to the relations between man and his Creator, is nothing better than an ignorant and uncharitable bigotry. To maintain that, till Luther dispelled the illusion, the Christian world regarded the good actions of this life as investing even him who performs them best with a *right* to demand from his Maker an eternity of uninterrupted and perfect bliss, is just as rational as to claim for him the detection of the universal error which had assigned to the animal man a place among the quadrupeds. There is in every human mind a certain portion of indestructible common sense. Small as this may be in most of us, it is yet enough to rescue us all, at least when sane and sober, from the stupidity of thinking, not only that the relations of creditor and debtor can really subsist between ourselves and Him who made

us, but that a return of such inestimable value can be due from Him for such ephemeral and imperfect services as ours. People may talk foolishly on these matters; but no one seriously believes this. Luther slew no such monster, for there were none such to be slain. The error which he refuted was far more subtle and refined than this, and is copiously explained by Hooker, to whose splendid sermon on the subject it is a 'good work' to refer any to whom it is unknown.

The celebrated thesis of 'Justification by Faith,' was peculiar to Luther and to his followers only in so far as he extricated it from a mass of superstitions by which it had been obscured, and assigned to it the prominence in his system to which it was justly entitled. But if his indignation was roused against those who had darkened this great truth, they by whom it was made an apology for lewdness and rapine were the objects of his scorn and abhorrence. His attack on the Anabaptists is conceived in terms so vigorous and so whimsical, that it is difficult to resist the temptation to exhibit some extracts. But who would needlessly disturb the mould beneath which lies interred and forgotten a mass of disgusting folly, which in a remote age exhaled a moral pestilence? Resolving all the sinister phenomena of life, by assuming the direct interference of the devil and his angels in the affairs of men, Luther thought that this influence had been most unskilfully employed at Munster. It was a *coup manqué* on the part of the great enemy of mankind. It showed that Satan was but a bungler at his art. The Evil One had been betrayed into this gross mistake, that the world might be on their guard against the more astute artifices to which he was about to resort:—

'These new theologians did not,' he said, 'explain themselves very clearly.'—'Having hot soup in his mouth, the devil was obliged to content himself with mumbling out *mum mum*, wishing doubtless to say something worse.'—'The spirit which would deceive the world must not begin by yielding to the fascinations of woman, by grasping the emblems and honours of royalty, still less by cutting people's throats. This is too broad; rapacity and oppression can deceive no one. The real deceit will be practised by him who shall dress himself in mean apparel, assume a lamentable countenance, hang down his head, refuse money, abstain from meat, fly from woman as so much poison, disclaim all temporal authority, and reject all honours as damnable; and who then, creeping softly towards the throne, the sceptre, and the keys, shall pick them up and possess himself of them by stealth. Such is the man who would succeed, who would deceive the angels and the very elect. This would indeed be a splendid devil, with a plumage more

gorgeous than the peacock or the pheasant. But thus impudently to seize the crown, to take not merely one wife, but as many as caprice or appetite suggests — oh! it is the conduct of a mere schoolboy devil, of a devil at his A B C; or rather, it is the true Satan — Satan, the learned and the crafty, but fettered by the hands of God with chains so heavy that he cannot move. It is to warn us, it is to teach us to fear his chastisements, before the field is thrown open to a more subtle devil, who will assail us no longer with the A B C, but with the real, the difficult text. If this mere *deviling* at his letters can do such things, what will he not do when he comes to act as a reasonable, knowing, skilful, lawyer-like, theological devil?’

These various contests produced in the mind of Luther the effects which painful experience invariably yields, when the search for truth, prompted by the love of truth, has been long and earnestly maintained. Advancing years brought with them an increase of candour, moderation, and charity. He had lived to see his principles strike their roots deeply through a large part of the Christian world, and he anticipated, with perhaps too sanguine hopes, their universal triumph. His unshaken reliance in them was attested by his dying breath. But he had also lived to witness the defection of some of his allies, and the guilt and folly of others. Prolonged inquiry had disclosed to him many difficulties which had been overlooked in the first ardour of the dispute, and he had become painfully convinced that the establishment of truth is an enterprise incomparably more arduous than the overthrow of error. His constitutional melancholy deepened into a more habitual sadness — his impetuosity gave way to a more serene and pensive temper — and as the tide of life ebbed with still increasing swiftness, he was chiefly engaged in meditating on those cardinal and undisputed truths, on which the weary mind may securely repose, and the troubled heart be still.

The maturer thoughts of age could not, however, quell the rude vigour and fearless confidence which had borne him through his early contests. With little remaining fondness or patience for abstruse speculations, he was challenged to debate one of the more subtle points of theology. His answer cannot be too deeply pondered by polemics at large. ‘Should we not,’ he said, ‘get on better in this discussion with the assistance of a jug or two of beer?’ The offended disputant retired, — ‘the devil,’ observed Luther, ‘being a haughty spirit, who can bear anything better than being laughed at.’

This growing contempt for unprofitable questions was indicated by a corresponding decline in Luther’s original estimate of the im-

portance of some of the minor topics in debate with the Church of Rome. He was willing to consign to silence the question of the veneration due to the Saints. He suspended his judgment respecting prayers for the dead. He was ready to acquiesce in the practice of auricular confession, for the solace of those who regarded it as an essential religious observance. He advised Spalatin to do whatever he thought best respecting the elevation of the Host, deprecating only any positive rule on the subject. He held the established ceremonies to be useful, from the impression they left on gross and uncultivated minds. He was tolerant of images in the churches, and censured the whole race of image-breakers with his accustomed vehemence. Even the use of the vernacular tongue in public worship he considered as a convenient custom, not an indispensable rule. Carlostadt had insisted upon it as essential. 'Oh, this is an incorrigible spirit,' replied the more tolerant Reformer; 'for ever and for ever positive obligations and sins!'

But while his catholic spirit thus raised him above the exaggerated estimate of those external things which chiefly attracted the hostility of narrower minds, his sense of the value of those great truths in which he judged the essence of religion to consist, was acquiring increased intensity and depth. In common with Montaigne and Richard Baxter (names hardly to be associated on any other ground), he considered the Lord's Prayer as surpassing every other devotional exercise. 'It is my prayer,' said Luther; 'there is nothing like it.' In the same spirit, he preferred the Gospel of St. John to all the other sacred books, as containing more of the language of Christ himself. As he felt, so he taught. He practised the most simple and elementary style of preaching. 'If,' he said, 'in my sermons I thought of Melancthon and other doctors, I should do no good; but I speak with perfect plainness for the ignorant, and that satisfies everybody. Such Greek, Latin, and Hebrew as I have, I reserve for the learned.'—'Nothing is more agreeable or useful for a common audience than to preach on the duties and examples of Scripture. Sermons on grace and justification fall coldly on their ears.' He taught that good and true theology consisted in the practice, the habit, and the life of the Christian graces—Christ being the foundation. 'Such, however,' he says, 'is not our theology now-a-days. We have substituted for it a rational and speculative theology. This was not the case with David. He acknowledged his sins, and said, *Miserere mei Domine!*'

Luther's power of composition is, indeed, held very cheap by a judge so competent as Mr. Hallam: nor is it easy to commend his more elaborate style. It was compared by himself to the earth-



quake and the wind which preceded the still small voice addressed to the prophet in the wilderness; and is so turbulent, copious, and dogmatical, as to suggest the supposition that it was not written by his own hand, but dictated to an amanuensis, or perhaps to a class of submissive pupils, under the influence of extreme excitement. Obscure, redundant, and tautologous as these writings appear, they are still redeemed from neglect, not only by the mighty name of their author, but by that all-pervading vitality and downright earnestness which atone for the neglect of all the mere artifices of style; and by that profound familiarity with the sacred oracles, which far more than compensates for the absence of that speculative wisdom which is drawn from lower sources.

But the Reformer's lighter and more occasional works not unfrequently breathe the very soul of eloquence. His language in these, ranges between colloquial homeliness and the highest dignity,—now condensed into vivid figures, and then diffused into copious amplification,—exhibiting the successive phases of his ardent, melancholy, playful, and heroic character in such rapid succession, and with such perfect harmony, as to resemble the harp of Dryden's Timotheus, alternately touched and swept by the hand of the master—a performance so bold and so varied, as to scare the critic from the discharge of his office. The address, for example, to the Swabian insurgents and nobles, if not executed with the skill, is at least conceived in the spirit of a great orator. The universal testimony of all the most competent judges, attests the excellence of his translation of the Bible, and assigns to him in the literature of his country, a station corresponding to that of the great men to whom James committed the corresponding office in our own.

Bayle has left to the friends of Luther no duty to perform in the defence of his moral character, but that of appealing to the unanswerable reply which his Dictionary contains to the charges preferred against the Reformer by his enemies. One unhappy exception is indeed to be made. It is impossible to read without pain the names of Luther, Melancthon, and Bucer, amongst the subscribers to the address to the Landgrave of Hesse, on the subject of his intended polygamy. Those great but fallible men remind his Highness of the distinction between universal laws, and such as admit of dispensation in particular cases. They cannot publicly sanction polygamy. But his Highness is of a peculiar constitution, and is exhorted seriously to examine all the considerations laid before him; yet, if he is absolutely resolved to marry a second time, it is their opinion that he should do so as secretly as possible! Fearful is the energy with which the 'Eagle of Meaux' pounces on this fatal error,—tearing to pieces the flimsy pretexts alleged in

defence of such an evasion of the Christian code. The charge admits of no defence. To the inference drawn from it against the Reformer's doctrine, every Protestant has a conclusive answer. Whether in faith or in practice, he acknowledges no infallible Head but one.

But we have wandered far and wide from our proper subject. Where, all this while, is the story of Luther's education, of his visit to Rome, of the sale of Indulgences, of the denunciations of Tetzel, of the controversy with Eccius, the Diets of Worms and Augsburg, the citations before Cajetan and Charles, the papal excommunication, and the appeal to a general council? These, and many other of the most momentous incidents of the Reformer's life, are recorded in M. D'Aubigné's work, from which our attention has been diverted by matters of less account, but perhaps a little less familiar.

It would be unpardonable, however, to pass over such a work with a merely ceremonious notice. The absolute merit of M. D'Aubigné's 'Life of Martin Luther' is great, but the comparative value far greater. In the English language it has no competitor; and, though Melancthon himself was the biographer of his friend, we believe that no foreign tongue contains so complete and impressive a narrative of these events.

It is true that M. D'Aubigné neither deserves nor claims a place amongst those historians, usually distinguished as philosophical. He does not aspire to illustrate the principles which determine or pervade the character, the policy, or the institutions of mankind. He arms himself with no dispassionate scepticism, and scarcely affects to be impartial. To tell his tale copiously and clearly, is the one object of his literary ambition. To exhibit the actors on the scene of life, as the free but unconscious agents of the Divine Will, is the higher design with which he writes; to trace the mysterious intervention of Providence in reforming the errors and abuses of the Christian Church is his immediate end; and to exalt the name of Luther, his labour of love.

These purposes, as far as they are attainable, are effectually attained. M. D'Aubigné is a Protestant of the original stamp, and a Biographer of the old fashion;—not a calm, candid, discriminating weigher and measurer of a great man's parts, but a warm-hearted champion of his glory, and a resolute apologist even for his errors;—ready to do battle in his cause with all who shall impugn or derogate from his fame. His book is conceived in the spirit, and executed with all the vigour, of Dr. Mc'Crie's 'Life of Knox.' He has all our lamented countryman's sincerity, all his deep research, more skill in composition, and a greater mastery of subordinate details; along with the same inestimable faculty of carrying on his

story from one stage to another, with an interest which never subsides, and a vivacity which knows no intermission. If he displays no familiarity with the moral sciences, he is no mean proficient in that art which reaches to perfection only in the Drama or the Romance. It is the art, not of inventing, but of discerning such incidents as impart life and animation to a narrative. For M. D'Aubigné is a writer of scrupulous veracity. He is at least an honest guide, though his prepossessions may be too strong to render him worthy of implicit confidence. They are such, however, as to make him the uncompromising and devoted advocate of those cardinal tenets on which Luther erected the edifice of the Reformation. To the one great article of the Faith on which the Reformer chiefly insisted in his assault on the Papacy, the eye of the Biographer is directed with scarcely less intentness. To this, every other truth is viewed as subordinate and secondary; and although, on this favourite point of doctrine, M. D'Aubigné's meaning is too often obscured by declamation, yet must he be hailed by every genuine friend of the Reformation, as having raised a powerful voice in favour of one of the fundamental truths of the Gospel—truths which, so long as they are faithfully taught and diligently observed, will continue to form the great bulwarks of Christendom against the overweening estimate, and the despotic use, of human authority, in opposition to the authority of the Revealed Will of God.

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## THE FRENCH BENEDICTINES.

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MIDDLETON and Gibbon rendered a real, however undesigned, service to Christianity, by attempting to prove that the rapid extension of the Primitive Church was merely the natural result of natural causes. For what better proof could be given of the Divine origin of any religion than by showing that it had at once overspread the civilised world, by the expansive power of an inherent aptitude to the nature and to the wants of mankind? By entering on a still wider range of inquiry, those great but disingenuous writers might have added much to the evidence of the fact they alleged, although at a still greater prejudice to the conclusion at which they aimed.

It is not predicted in the Old Testament that the progress of the Gospel should, to any great extent, be the result of any agency preternatural and opposed to ordinary experience; nor is any such fact alleged in any of the apostolical writings as having actually occurred. There is, indeed, no good reason to suppose that such miraculous though transient disturbances of the laws of the material or the moral world, would have long or powerfully controlled either the belief or the affections of mankind. The heavenly husbandman selected the kindest soil and the most propitious season for sowing the grain of mustard seed; and so, as time rolled on, the adaptation of our faith to the character and the exigencies of our race was continually made manifest, though under new and ever varying forms.

Thus the Church was at first Congregational, that by the agitation of the lowest strata of society, the superincumbent mass of corruption, idolatry, and mental servitude might be broken up—then Synodal or Presbyterian, that the tendency of separate societies to heresy and schism might be counteracted—then Episcopal, that in ages of extreme difficulty and peril, the whole body might act in concert and with decision—then Papal, that it might oppose a visible unity to the armies of the Crescent and the barbarians of the North—then Monastic, that learning, art, and piety might be



preserved in impregnable retreats amidst the deluge of ignorance and of feudal oppression — then Scholastic, that the human mind might be educated for a return to a sounder knowledge, and to primitive doctrine — then Protestant, that the soul might be emancipated from error, superstition, and spiritual despotism — then *partially* Reformed, in the very bosom of the papacy, lest that emancipation should hurry the whole of Christendom into precipitate change and lawless anarchy — and then at length Philosophical, to prove that as there are no depths of sin or misery to which the healing of the Gospel cannot reach, so there are no heights of speculation to which the wisdom of the Gospel cannot ascend.

Believing thus in the Perpetuity as well as on the Catholicity of the Church, and judging that she is still the same in spirit throughout all ages, although, in her external developments, flexible to the varying necessities of all, we have ventured on some former occasions, and are again about to assert, for ‘the pure and reformed branches’ of it in England and in Scotland, an alliance with the heroes of the faith in remote times, and in less enlightened countries; esteeming that to be the best Protestantism which, while it frankly condemns the errors of other Christian societies, yet claims fellowship with the piety, the wisdom, and the love, which, in the midst of these errors, have attested the divine original of them all.

If, according to the advice which on some of those occasions we have presumed to offer to those who are studious of such subjects, there be among us any scholar meditating a Protestant history of the Monastic Orders, he will find materials for a curious chapter in the correspondence of the French Benedictines of the reign of Louis XIV. which was published in the year 1846 by M. Valery at Paris. In that fraternity light and darkness succeeded each other by a law the reverse of that which obtained in Europe at large. From the promulgation of their rule in the sixth century, their monasteries were comparatively illuminated amidst the general gloom of the dark ages. But when the sun arose on the outer world, its beams scarcely penetrated their cloisters; nor did they hail the returning dawn of literature and science until the day was glowing all around them in meridian splendour. Then, however, passing at one vault from the haze of twilight to the radiance of noon, they won the wreath of superior learning, even in the times of Tillemont and Du Cange — though resigning the palm of genius to Bourdaloue, Bossuet, and Pascal. Thus the three great epochs of their annals are denoted by the growth, the obscurity, and the revival of their intellectual eminence. M. Valery’s volumes illustrate the third and last stage of this progress, which cannot, however, be understood without a rapid glance at each of the two preceding stages.

‘But why,’ it may be asked, ‘direct the eye at all to the mouldering records of monastic superstition, self-indulgence, and hypocrisy?’ Why, indeed? From contemplating the mere debasement of any of the great families of man, no images can be gathered to delight the fancy, nor any examples to move or to invigorate the heart. And doubtless he who seeks for such knowledge, may find in the chronicles of the convent a fearful disclosure of the depths of sin and folly into which multitudes of our brethren have plunged, under the pretence of more than human sanctity. But the same legends will supply some better lessons, to him who reads books that he may learn to love, and to benefit his fellow-men. They will teach him that, as in Judæa, the temple, so, in Christendom, the monastery, was the ark, freighted during the deluge, with the destinies of the Church and of the world,—that there our own spiritual and intellectual ancestry found shelter amidst the tempest,—that there were matured those powers of mind which gradually infused harmony and order into the warring elements of the European Commonwealth,—and that there many of the noblest ornaments of our common Christianity were trained to instruct, to govern, and to bless the nations of the West.

Guided by the maxim ‘that whatever any one saint records of any other saint must be true,’ we glide easily over the enchanted land along which Domnus Johannes Mabillon conducts the readers of the earlier parts of his wondrous compilations; receiving submissively the assurance that St. Benedict sang eucharistic hymns in his mother’s womb—raised a dead child to life—caused his pupil Maurus to tread the water dry-shod—untied by a word the knotted cords with which an Arian Goth (Zalla by name) had bound an honest rustic—cast out of one monk a demon who had assumed the disguise of a farrier—rendered visible to another a concealed dragon, who was secretly tempting him to desert his monastery—and, by laying a consecrated wafer on the bosom of a third, enabled him to repose in a grave which till then had continually cast him out;—for all these facts the great annalist relates of his patriarch St. Benedict, on the authority of the pontiff (first of that name) St. Gregory. If, however, the record had contained no better things than these, the memorial of Benedict would long since have perished with him.

His authentic biography is comprised in a very few words. He was born towards the end of the fifth century, at Nursia, in the duchy of Spoleto. His mother died in giving him birth. He was sent to Rome for his education by his father, a member of the Anician family, which Claudian has celebrated; but was driven from

the city by the invasions of Odoacer and Theodoric to the Mons Subiacus, where, while yet a beardless youth, he took up his abode as a hermit. Like Jerome, he was haunted in his solitude by the too vivid remembrance of a Roman lady; and subdued his voluptuous imagination by rolling his naked body among the thorns. The fame of such premature sanctity recommended him to the monks of the neighbouring monastery as their abbot; but scarcely had he assumed the office when, disgusted by the rigours of his discipline, the electors attempted to get rid of him by poison. Returning to his hermitage, he soon found himself in the centre of several rude huts, erected in his vicinity by other fugitives from the world, who acknowledged him as the superior of this monastic village. But their misconduct compelled him again to seek a new retirement; which he found at Monte Casino, on the frontiers of the Abbruzzi. There, attended by some of his pupils and former associates, he passed the remainder of his life—composing his rule, and establishing the Order which, at the distance of thirteen centuries, still retains his name and acknowledges his authority. He died in the year 543, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

To the intercourse of Benedict with the refractory monks of Subiaco, may perhaps be traced the basis of his system. It probably revealed to him the fact that Indolence, Self-will, and Selfishness are the three archdæmons of the cloister; and suggested the inference that Industry, Obedience, and Community of goods are the antagonist powers which ought to govern there. But the comprehensiveness of thought with which he so exhausted the science of monastic polity, that all subsequent rules have been nothing more than modifications of his own,—the prescience with which he reconciled conventual franchises with abbatial dominion,—the skill with which he at once concentrated and diffused power among the different members of his Order, according as the objects in view were general or local,—and the deep insight into the human heart by which he rendered myriads of men and women, during more than thirty successive generations, the spontaneous instruments of his purposes,—these all unite to prove that profound genius, extensive knowledge, and earnest meditation, had raised him to the very first rank of uninspired legislators. His disciples, indeed, find in his legislative wisdom a conclusive proof that he wrote and acted under a divine impulse. Even to those who reject this solution it is still a phenomenon affording ample exercise for a liberal curiosity.

That the Benedictine statutes remain to this day a living code, written in the hearts of multitudes in every province of the

Christian world, is chiefly perhaps to be ascribed to the inflexible rigour with which they annihilated the cares and responsibilities of freedom. To the baser sort no yoke is so galling as that of self-control; no deliverance so welcome as that of being handsomely rid of free agency. With such men mental slavery readily becomes a habit, a fashion, and a pride. To the abject many, the abdication of self-government is a willing sacrifice. It is reserved for the nobler few to rise to the arduous virtues of using wisely the gifts which God bestows, and walking courageously, though circumspectly and humbly, in the light which God vouchsafes.

And by the abject many, though often under the guidance of the nobler few, were peopled the cells of Monte Casino and her affiliated convents. Their gates were thrown open to men of every rank, in whom the abbot or prior of the house could discover the marks of a genuine vocation. To exclude any such candidate, though a pauper or a slave, would have been condemned by Benedict, in the words and spirit of Augustine, as *grave delictum*. In those sacred enclosures, therefore, many poor and illiterate brethren found a refuge. But they were distinguished from the rest as *conversi*, — that is, as persons destined neither for the priesthood nor the tonsure, but bound to labour for the society as husbandmen, shepherds, artizans, or domestic servants.

In the whirl and uproar of the handicrafts of our own day, it is difficult to imagine the noiseless spectacle which in those ages so often caught the eye, as it gazed on the secluded abbey and the adjacent grange. In black tunics, the mementos of death, and in leathern girdles, the emblems of chastity, might then be seen carters silently yoking their bullocks to the team, and driving them in silence to the field, — or shepherds interchanging some inevitable whispers while they watched their flocks, — or vine-dressers pruning the fruit of which they might neither taste or speak, — or wheelwrights, carpenters, and masons plying their trades like the inmates of some deaf and dumb asylum, — and all pausing from their labours as the convent bell, sounding the hours of primes, or nones, or vespers, summoned them to join in spirit, even when they could not repair in person, to those sacred offices. Around the monastic workshop might be observed the belt of cultivated land, continually encroaching on the adjacent forest; and the passer-by might trace to the toils of these mute workmen the opening of roads, the draining of marshes, the herds grazing, and the harvests waving, in security, under the shelter of ecclesiastical privileges which even the Vandal and the Ostrogoth regarded with respect. Our own annual agricultural meetings, with their implements, and their prizes, their short horns and their long speeches, must carry back their



economic genealogy to those husbandmen who, with dismal aspect, brawny arms, and compressed lips, first taught the conquerors of Rome the science in which Columella and Virgil had instructed the ancient Romans.

A similar pedigree must be assigned to our academies of painting, sculpture, architecture, and music. The fine arts are merely imitative in their infancy; though as they become mature, they also become symbolical. And this maturity is first attained by the architect, because he ministers to a want more urgent than the rest, — because, in the order of time, the edifice must precede the works designed for its embellishment, — and because finding in nature no models except for the details of his performance, he must, from the first, be inventive in the composition of it. Thus the children of Benedict, when contemplating their lofty avenues, sacred to meditation — and the mellowed lights streaming through the foliage — and the flowers clustering in the conventual garden — and the pendulous stalactites of the neighbouring grottoes, — conceived of a Christian temple in which objects resembling these, though hewn out of imperishable stone, and carved into enduring forms, might be combined and grouped together into one glorious whole. With a ritual addressed to the eye rather than to the ear — a sacred pantomime, of which the sacrifice of the mass was the action, the priests the actors, and the high altar the stage, — nothing more was requisite to the solemn exhibition but the cathedral, as its appropriate theatre. It arose, therefore, not the servile representation of any one natural object, but the majestic combination of the forms of many; and full of mystic significance, in the cruciform plan, the lofty arch, the oriel windows, the lateral chapels, and the central elevation. Not a groining, a mullion, or a tracery was there, in which the initiated eye did not read some masonic enigma, some ghostly counsel, or some inarticulate summons to confession, to penitence, or to prayer.

Every niche without, and every shrine within, these sanctuaries, was adorned with images of their tutelary saints; and especially of Her who is supreme among the demigods of this celestial hierarchy. But, instead of rising to the impersonation of holiness, beauty, or power, in these human forms, the monkish sculptors were content to copy the indifferent models of humanity within their reach; and the statues, busts, and reliefs which, in subsequent times, fell beneath the blows of Protestant Iconoclasts, had little if any value but that which belonged to their peculiar locality and their accidental associations. In painting also, whether encaustic, in fresco, or on wood, the performances of the early Benedictine artists were equally humble. In order to give out their visible poetry, the

chisel and the pencil must be guided by minds conversant with the cares and the enjoyments of life; for it is by such minds only that the living soul which animates mute nature can ever be perceived; or can be expressed in the delineation of realities, whether animated or inanimate. In ecclesiastical and conventual architecture, and in that art alone, the monks exhausted their creative imagination; covering Europe with monuments of their science in statics and dynamics, and with monuments of that plastic genius, which, from an infinity of elaborate, incongruous, and often worthless, details, knew how to evoke one sublime and harmonious whole. In those august shrines, if anywhere on earth, the spirit of criticism is silenced by the belief that the adorations of men are mingled in blest accord with the hallelujahs of heaven.

To animate that belief, the Benedictine musicians produced those chants which, when long afterwards combined by Palestrina into the Mass of Pope Marcellus, were hailed with rapture by the Roman Conclave and the Fathers of Trent, as the golden links which bind together in an indissoluble union the supplications of the Militant Church and the thanksgivings of the Church Triumphant.<sup>1</sup>

‘Lusts of the imagination!’ exclaimed, and may yet exclaim, the indignant pulpits of Scotland, and Geneva — ‘lusts as hostile to the purity of the Christian Faith as the grosser lusts of the flesh or the emptiest vanities of life.’ Hard words these for our restorers of church architecture in mediæval splendour! Let the Camden Society, the Lord of Wilton, and the benchers of the Temple look to it; while we, all innocent of any such sumptuous designs — her Majesty’s Church Building Commissioners themselves not more so — refer to these Benedictine prodigies only as illustrating a memorable passage in Benedictine History.

But art was regarded by the fathers of that order rather as the delight than as the serious occupation of their brotherhood. With a self-reliance as just as that of the great philosopher, if not as sublime, they took to themselves all knowledge as their proper province. Their rule assigned an eminent rank among monastic virtues to the guardianship and multiplication of valuable manuscripts. It taught the copyist of a holy book to think of himself as at once a pupil and a teacher, — as a missionary while seated at his desk — using each finger as a tongue — inflicting on the Spirit of Evil a deadly wound at each successive line — and as baffling, with the pen, the dread enemy, who smiles at the impotent hostility of every other weapon grasped by the hand of mortal man. In each Benedictine monastery a chamber was set apart for the discharge of this sacred office. In this *Scriptorium* some of the

monks plied their pens assiduously, and in profound silence, to produce faultless transcripts of the best originals. To others was committed the care of revising the text of such works as were then held in the highest esteem. Charlemagne himself assigned to the Benedictine Alcuin the high office of preparing, from the various sources within his reach, a perfect Codex of the Holy Scriptures. For what remains to us of Pliny, Sallust, and Macrobius, and for the orations against Verres, we are indebted to their literary zeal. A tribute of writing materials at the commencement of each novitiate, and another of books at its close, with an annual impost of manuscripts on the inferior houses, were continually augmenting the libraries of their greater convents. How extensive and how valuable such collections became, may be inferred from the directions given by the Benedictine Cassiodorus for the guidance of his brethren in their studies. He had collected, and he enjoins them to read, the Greek and Latin Fathers, the Church historians, the geographers and grammarians whose works were then extant and in repute, with various medical books, for the assistance of those monks to whom the care of the infirmary was confided. Whoever will consult the '*Historia Rei Literariæ Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*,' by their historiographer Magnoaldus Zeigelbauer, may rapidly accumulate the most conclusive proofs, that by their Order were either laid or preserved the foundations of all the eminent schools of learning of Modern Europe.

The greatness of the Benedictines did not, however, consist either in their agricultural skill, their prodigies of architecture, or their priceless libraries; but in their parentage of countless men and women, illustrious for active piety — for wisdom in the government of mankind — for profound learning — and for that contemplative spirit, which discovers within the soul itself things beyond the limits of the perceptible creation. Such, indeed, is the number of these worthies, that, if every page at our disposal were a volume, and every such volume as ponderous as our old acquaintance, Scapula, space would fail us to render justice to the achievements of the half of them. We cannot, however, pass by this goodly fellowship without a transient glance at one normal type, at the least, of each of these various forms of Benedictine heroism. For that purpose we need scarcely wander from the annals of our own land.

In the Benedictine abbey of Nutsall, near Winchester, Poetry, History, Rhetoric, and the Holy Scriptures were taught, in the beginning of the eighth century, by a monk whom his fellow countrymen called Winfred, but whom the Church honours under the name of Boniface. He was born at Crediton, in Devonshire, of

noble and wealthy parents, who had reluctantly yielded to his wish to embrace the monastic state. Hardly, however, had he reached middle life, when his associates at Nutsall discovered that he was dissatisfied with the pursuits by which their own thoughts were engrossed. As, in his evening meditations, he paced the long conventual avenue of lime trees, or as, in the night-watches, he knelt before the crucifix suspended in his cell, he was still conscious of a voice, audible though inarticulate, which repeated to him the Divine injunction, to 'go and preach the Gospel to all nations.' Then, in mental vision, was seen stretching out before him the land of his German ancestry; where, beneath the veil of the customs described by Tacitus, was concealed an idolatry of which the historian had neither depicted, nor probably conjectured, the abominations. To encounter Satan in this stronghold, became successively the day dream, the passion, and the fixed resolve of Boniface; until at length abandoning, for this holy war, the studious repose for which he had already abandoned the world, he appeared, in his thirty-sixth year, a solitary and unbefriended missionary, traversing the marshy sands and the primæval forests of Friesland. But Charles Martel was already there, — the leader in a far different contest; nor, while the Christian Mayor of the Palace was striking down the Pagans with his battle-axe, could the pathetic entreaties of the Benedictine Monk induce them to bow down to the banner of the Cross. He therefore returned to Nutsall, not with diminished zeal, but with increased knowledge. He had now learnt that his success must depend on the conduct of the secular and spiritual rulers of mankind, and on his own connection with them.

The chapter of his monastery chose him as their abbot; but, at his own request, the Bishop of Winchester annulled the election. Then, quitting for ever his native England, Boniface pursued his way to Rome, to solicit the aid of Pope Gregory II., in his efforts for the conversion of the German people.

Armed with a papal commission, a papal blessing, and a good store of relics, Boniface again appeared in Friesland, where Charles Martel was now the undisputed master. Victory had rendered him devout; and he gladly countenanced the labours of the monk, to bring his new subjects within the fold of the Christian Church. So ardent, indeed, was his zeal for this great work, that the destined author of it was soon compelled to migrate into Saxony, as the only means of escaping the unwelcome command of the conqueror to fix his residence in Friesland, and there to assume the coadjutorship and succession to the Bishop of Utrecht.

The missionary labours of Boniface, interrupted only by three



short visits to Rome, were prolonged over a period of more than thirty-six years; and were extended over all the territories between the Elbe, the Rhine, and the Ocean. At Rome he sought and found all the support which papal authority, zeal, and wisdom could afford him. Gregory II. consecrated him a bishop, though without a diocese. Gregory III. raised him to be the Archbishop and Primate of all Germany; with power to establish bishoprics there at his discretion. The same pontiff afterwards nominated him Legate of the Holy See, in Germany and France. To these distinctions Pope Zachary added the Archbishopric of Mentz, then first constituted the metropolis of the German churches. Last of all was bestowed on him the singular privilege of appointing his own successor in his primacy.

There have been churchmen to whom such a memento of the vanity of even the highest ecclesiastical dignities would have afforded but an equivocal satisfaction. To Boniface the remembrance of the shortness of life was not only familiar, but welcome. The treatise of Ambrose on the advantages of death was his constant companion. It had taught him to regard his successive promotions but as the means of preparing his mind for the joyful resignation of them all. His seventy-fourth year was now completed. For the spiritual care of his converts he had established seven new bishoprics; and had built and endowed many monasteries for the advancement of piety and learning among them. At last, abdicating his own mitre in favour of Lullus, a monk of Malmesbury, he solemnly devoted his remaining days to that office of a missionary, which he justly esteemed as far nobler than any symbolised by the crosier, the purple, or the tiara. Girding round him his black Benedictine habit, and depositing his Ambrose, ‘*De Bono Mortis*,’ in the folds of it, he once more travelled to Friesland; and, pitching his tent on the banks of a small rivulet, awaited there the arrival of a body of neophytes, whom he had summoned to receive at his hands the rite of confirmation.

Ere long a multitude appeared in the distance, advancing towards the tent; not, however, with the lowly demeanour of Christian converts drawing near to their bishop, but carrying deadly weapons, and announcing by their cries and gestures that they were Pagans, sworn to avenge their injured deities against the arch-enemy of their worship. The servants of Boniface drew their swords in his defence; but calmly, and even cheerfully, awaiting the approach of his enemies, and forbidding all resistance, he fell beneath their blows—a martyr to the faith which he had so long lived, and so bravely died, to propagate. His copy of Ambrose, ‘*De Bono Mortis*,’ covered with his blood, was exhibited,

during many succeeding centuries, at Fulda as a relic. It was contemplated there by many who regarded as superstitious and heretical some of the tenets of Boniface. But no Christian, whatever might be his own peculiar creed, ever looked upon that blood-stained memorial of him without the profoundest veneration.

For, since the Apostolic Age, no greater benefactor of our race has arisen among men than the Monk of Nutsall, unless it be that other Monk of Wittemberg who, at the distance of seven centuries, appeared to reform and reconstruct the churches founded by the holy Benedictine. To Boniface the north and west of Germany, and Holland, still look back as their spiritual progenitor; nor did any uninspired man ever add to the permanent dominion of the Gospel provinces of such extent and value.

If, in accomplishing that great work, Boniface relied more on human authority than is consistent with the practice, or, rather, with the theory, of our Protestant churches, his still extant letters will show that he rebuked, with indignant energy, the vices of the great on whom he was dependent. In placing the crown of Childeric on the head of Pepin, he may have been guilty of some worldly compliance with the usurper. Yet it is not to be forgotten that the Pope himself had favoured the cause of the Mayor of the Palace, by his Delphic response, '*Melius esse illum vocari regem apud quem summa potestas consisteret.*'

The guides of our own missionary enterprises will, probably, accuse Boniface of undue promptitude in admitting within the pale any one who chose to submit himself to the mere outward form of baptism. His facility is indisputable; but what Protestant will venture to condemn the measures which brought within the precincts of the Christian Church the native lands of Luther, of Grotius, and of Melancthon?

On a single occasion we find him wearing a garb at least resembling that of an inquisitor. Within his spiritual jurisdiction came a Frenchman, working miracles, and selling as relics the cuttings of his own hair and the parings of his own nails. This worthy had an associate in one Vincent, a Scotchman, a sort of premature Knox — a teacher, it is said, of heresies, but certainly a stout opponent of all the laws and canons of the Church. Moved by Boniface, the secular arm lodged them both in close prison; and, all things considered, one must doubt their claim to any better lodgings.

Peace be, however, to the faults of Boniface whatever they may have been! Among the heroes of active piety, the world has few greater to revere; as the disciples of Benedict have assuredly none greater to boast.

They boast, however, in Lanfranc, another primate, to whose far-seeing wisdom in the government of mankind may not obscurely be traced much of the vital spirit of those venerable institutions which are still the glory of the Anglo-Saxon race in our own islands and in the North American continent. In his romance of 'Harold,' Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, solving with equal erudition and creative fancy, the great problem of his art (the problem how to produce the greatest amount of dramatic effect at the least expense of historical truth), has produced a living portrait of Lanfranc, the subtle Italian, who, armed with homilies for the devout, jests for the facetious, austerities for the superstitious, learning for the inquisitive, and obsequiousness for the great, renders the weakness and the strength of each in turn tributary to his own ambition; and ascends the throne of Canterbury, not merely by the aid of the meek old Abbot Herduin, but on the shoulders of the imperious William and the imperial Hildebrand. Our great master of historico-romantic portraiture would have destroyed the picturesque unity of his beautiful sketch, if, by advancing further, he had taught us (and who could have taught us so powerfully?) how vast is the debt of gratitude which England owes to her great primates, Lanfranc, Anselm, Langton, and Becket,—or rather to that benign Providence which raised them up in that barbarous age. Whatever may have been their personal motives, and whatever their demerits, they, and they alone, wrestled successfully with the despotism of the Conqueror and his descendants to the fourth generation; maintaining among us, even in those evil days, the balanced power, the control of public opinion, and the influence of moral, over physical, a force, which from their times passed as a birthright to the parliaments of Henry III. and his successors; and which at this day remains the inheritance of England, and of all the free communities with which she has covered, and is still peopling, the globe. The thunders and reproaches of Rome are sufficiently encountered, by such reverberated thunders and reproaches as they provoke. To those who deplore alike the necessity and the rancor of the conflict, it may yet be permitted to render a due and therefore a reverent homage to the ancient prelates of the Roman Church. Unchecked by the keen wisdom, the ecclesiastical policy, and the Roman sympathies of the Benedictine Lanfranc, the fierce Conqueror would have acquired and transmitted to his posterity on the English throne, a power absolute and arbitrary, beneath the withering influence of which every germ of the future liberties and greatness of England must have prematurely perished.

When, in the mind of William Rufus, the fear of death had pre-

veiled over the thirst for the revenues of Canterbury, he placed the mitre of Lanfranc on the head of the Benedictine Anselm; anticipating, probably, a less effective assertion of the rights of the Church by the retired and gentle student, than had been made by his insinuating and worldly-wise predecessor. In the great controversy of investitures, however, Anselm showed that nothing is so inflexible as meekness, sustained and animated by the firm conviction of right. Yet at the very moment of success he turned aside from these agitations to revolve the mysterious enigmas which it was at once the purpose and the delight of his existence to unravel. Those boundless realms of thought over which, in the solitude of his library, he enjoyed a princely, but unenvied dominion, were in his eyes of incomparably higher value than either his primacy of the Church of England, or his triumph in maintaining the prerogatives of the Church of Rome. In our days, indeed, his speculations are forgotten; and the very subjects of them have fallen into disesteem. Yet, except, perhaps, the writings of Erigena, those of Anselm on the 'Will of God,' on 'Truth,' on 'Free-will,' and on the 'Divine Prescience,' are not only, in point of time, the earliest examples, but, in the order of invention, the earliest models, of those scholastic works, which exhibit, in such intimate and curious union, the prostration and the aspirings of the mind of man — prostrating itself to the most absurd of human dogmas — aspiring to penetrate the loftiest and the most obscure of the Divine attributes.

Truth may have concealed herself from most of these inquirers; but their researches formed no unimportant part of the education which was gradually preparing the intellect of Europe for admission into her sanctuary. Among the followers of Anselm are to be reckoned not merely the Doctors — Venerable, Invincible, Irrefragable, Angelical, and Seraphic, — but a far greater than they, even Des Cartes himself — who, as may be learnt from Brucker, borrowed from the Benedictine philosopher his proof of the Being of a God. Anselm taught that the abstract idea of Deity was the fontal principle of all knowledge — that as God himself is the primæval source of all existence in the outer world, so the Idea of God precedes, and conducts us to, all other ideas in the world within us — and that, until we have risen to that remotest spring of all our thoughts, we cannot conceive rightly of the correspondence of our own perceptions with the realities amidst which we exist.

If these speculations are not very intelligible, they are at least curious. They show that the metaphysicians who lived when Westminster Hall was rising from its foundations, and those who



lived when the first stone of our Edinburgh University was laid, beat themselves very much in the same manner against the bars of their mental prison-house.

Philosophy may thrive in other places than conventual cells. But there is a literature which scarcely flourishes elsewhere. The peculiar and spontaneous product of the monastery is mystic devotion. If the Benedictines had been cursed with barrenness in yielding this fruit, they would have resembled a Dutch garden in which it was impossible to cultivate the tulip. But no such reproach clings to the sons and daughters of Benedict. It must, however, be admitted that our own land has been singularly destitute of fertility in this the most delicate of all the plants cultivated in monastic seclusion. We produced schoolmen to satiety. Eri-gena, Hales, Duns Scotus, and Occam were our own. But we must pass over to Spain and Germany to find a type of Benedictine greatness, in that impalpable though gorgeous world, which in later times was inhabited by Molinos and by Fénelon.

In those more fortunate regions, many are the half-inspired rhapsodists whom we encounter — chiefly ladies — and, what is worthy of notice, ladies who from their childhood had scarcely ever strayed beyond the convent garden. Nevertheless, the indestructible peculiarity of our national character (whether it be shyness or dryness, — high aims or low aims, — the fear of irreverence for what is holy, or the fear of being laughed at for what is absurd), — that character which forbade the public utterance in these islands of the impassioned communings of the soul with its Maker and with itself, forbids us to make any report to our fellow-countrymen of the sublime ‘Canticles’ of St. Gertrude or of St. Theresa. Lest, however, our hasty sketch of Benedictine intellectual greatness should be defective, without some specimen of their super-terrestrial poetry, we venture to remind our readers of one passage of which M. de Malan (one of Mabillon’s biographers) has reminded us, in which the author of the ‘*De Imitatione Christi*’ (himself a Benedictine, if Mabillon may be trusted) has sung to his Æolian harp a more than earthly strain. It is, indeed, an excellent example of a style of which we have no model in our own language, — except perhaps in occasional passages of Archbishop Leighton.

‘My son, let not the sayings of men move thee, however beautiful or ingenious they may be: for the kingdom of God consisteth not in words but in power.’

‘Weigh well my words, for they kindle the heart, illuminate the mind, quicken compunction, and supply abundant springs of consolation.’

‘Read not the Word of God in order that thou mayest appear more learned or more wise.

‘When thou shalt have read and known many things, then return to the one beginning and principle of all things.

‘I am he that teacheth man knowledge, and to little children I impart an understanding more clear than man can teach.

‘He to whom I speak shall quickly be wise, and in spirit shall profit largely.

‘Woe be to them that search out many curious things, and take little thought how they may serve me.

‘I am he who, in one instant, raise up the humble in mind to understand eternal truth better than if he had studied many years in the schools.

‘I teach without noise of words, without confusion of opinions, without ambition of honour, without the shock of arguments.

‘To some men I speak common things, to others things rare; to some I appear sweetly by signs; to some, with much light, I discover mysteries.

‘The voice of books is, indeed, one; but it is a voice which instructs not all alike. I am he who teaches the truth concealed within the voice. I am the searcher of the heart, the discoverer of the thoughts, promoting holy actions, distributing to each one as I will.’

If, as the Benedictines maintained, this sacred chant was really sung by a poet of their own fraternity about the beginning of the fourteenth century, it may be looked upon as a kind of threnody, designed to intimate the approaching obscuration of their order. For already might be observed, in a state of morbid activity among them, those principles of decay which were pointed out so indignantly by Benedict himself to Dante, when, under the guidance of Beatrice, the poet had ascended to his presence in the seventh heaven:—

‘ \* \* My rule  
Is left a profitless stain upon the leaves;  
The walls, for abbeys reared, turned into dens;  
The cowls, to sacks choked up with musty meal.  
Foul usury doth not more lift itself  
Against God’s pleasure, than that fruit which makes  
The hearts of monks so wanton.’

*Curey’s Dante, canto xxii. ‘Il Paradiso.’*

In the lapse of more than seven centuries, the state of society had undergone vast changes; but the institutes of Benedict had not been changed to meet them. The new exigencies of life demanded reformations in the religious state which Francis, Domi-

nic, and Loyola, successively established. They combined a more mature policy with a younger enthusiasm. Exhibiting ascetic self-mortifications, till then unknown among any of the monastic communities of the West, they also formed relations, equally new, with the laity in all their offices—domestic, political, military, and commercial. Having, at the same time, obtained possession of nearly all the pulpits of the Latin Church, the imagination, the interests, and the consciences of mankind fell so much under the control of these new fraternities, that their influence was felt throughout all the ramifications of society.

While the spiritual dominion of the earlier monasticism was continually narrowed by this formidable competition, the Benedictines were no less constantly becoming more and more entangled in the cares and enjoyments of the world. They established an ill-omened alliance with the Templars, with the Knights of Calatrava and Alcantara, and with five other orders of chivalry—an unhalloved companionship, which, by familiarising the monks with the military and dissolute manners of these new brethren, gradually contaminated their own.

Wealth and temporal prosperity were no less prolific of evil in the order of St. Benedict than in other societies in which their enervating influence has been felt. But on the monks they inflicted a peculiar disaster. For their riches tempted the chief sovereigns of Europe to usurp the patronage of the religious houses; and to transfer the government of them from abbots elected by the chapters, to abbots appointed by the king.

The grant of these conventual benefices *in commendam*, was one of those abuses in the Church, which yielded to no reform until the Church herself and her abuses were swept away together, by the torrent of the French Revolution. It was, however, a practice in favour of which the most venerable antiquity might be alleged. From the earliest times churches had been placed under a kind of tutelage between the death of the incumbent and the appointment of his successor. But it not rarely happened that when the period of this spiritual guardianship was over, the tutor had become too much enamoured of his ward, and possessed too much influence with the great, to acquiesce in a separation from her. In such cases, the commendatory, aided by some ill-fed stipendiary curate, assumed all the privileges and immunities of a sinecurist.

Yet it was not necessary to rely on any vulgar names in defence or in extenuation of this usage. The great Athanasius himself held a bishopric *in commendam*, in addition to his see of Alexandria. Neither were they vulgar names by whom it was con-

demned. Hildebrand, Innocent III., and the Fathers of Trent, rivalled each other in denunciations of the abuse; and were cordially seconded by Philippe Auguste, by St. Louis, and even by Francis I. Papal, synodal, and royal decrees, proved, however, too feeble to check an abuse so tempting to royal and sacerdotal cupidity. The French kings converted the splendid monastery of Fontevault into an appanage for a long succession of royal or noble ladies. The abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés also was given *in commendam* by Louis the Debonnaire, to a bishop of Poitiers; by Eudes to his brother Robert, a layman; and at length, by Louis XIII., to a widow of the Duke of Lorraine — which is much as though the mastership of Trinity College, Cambridge, had been given to the widow of the Elector Palatine.

During the progress of this decay, there was no lack of reformers, or of reforms of the Benedictine Order. But the corrupting proved too strong for the renovating power; and their decline proceeded without any real check until, in the year 1614, Don Nicholas Benard became a member of the congregation of St. Maur.

Benard was one of those reformers to whom it is given to innovate, at once in the spirit of the institution which they desire to improve, and in the spirit of the age in which the improvement is to be made. His object was to bring back his Order to the dutifulness, the industry, and the self-renunciation enjoined by Benedict. His remedial process consisted in conducting them, by exhortation and by his own example, to the culture of those studies which were held in highest esteem in France in the reigns of the thirteenth and of the fourteenth Louis. In those times no seeds of science or literature could be sown in that favoured land without yielding an abundant increase. The reason of this redundant fertility at that particular era, no historian can explain and no psychologist can conjecture. But, like the other promoters of learning in his age, Benard soon found himself followed and surrounded by a band of scholars, who joined with him in the successful culture of all historical, antiquarian, and critical knowledge. With their aid he restored one of the chief households of the great Benedictine race to even more than their pristine glory.

During the seventeenth century one hundred and five writers in the congregation of St. Maur (then established at St. Germain-des-Prés) divided among them this harvest of literary renown. A complete collection of their works would form a large and very valuable library; as may indeed be inferred from a bare enumeration of the books of the earlier and later fathers, which they republished. Among them are the best editions which the world has



seen of the writings of St. Gregory the Great, of Lanfranc, Basil, Bernard, Anselm, Augustine, Cassiodorus, Ambrose, Hilary, Jerome, Athanasius, Gregory of Tours, Irenæus, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Tertullian, Justin, and Origen; to which must be added their edition of Josephus.

But it would be as easy to form an image of the Grecian camp from the catalogue of the ships, as to conceive aright of the Benedictines of St. Maur from an enumeration of their publications and of the names of the authors of them. To exhibit some slight sketch of that great seminary as it existed in its days of splendour, it is necessary to confine our attention to the Achilles of their host — to him whom all the rest revered as their great example, and acknowledged by acclamation as their head.

The life of Mabillon has been written by Ruinart, his affectionate pupil; by Dom Filipe le Cerf, the historiographer of the congregation; and more recently by M. Chavin de Malan. To the last of these biographers we are largely indebted for much valuable information. But a companion at once more instructive and provoking, or a guide less worthy of confidence, never offered himself at the outset of any literary journey. It is the pleasure of M. de Malan to qualify the speculative propensities of our own age by the blindest credulity of the middle ages. He is at the same moment a rhetorician and an antiquarian (as a dervish dances while he prays), and is never satisfied with investigating truth, unless he can also embellish and adorn it. Happily, however, we are not dependent on his guidance. All that is most interesting respecting Mabillon may be gathered from his own letters and his works. For to write was the very law of his existence; and from youth to old age his pen unceasingly plied those happy tasks, of which the interest never fails, and the tranquillity can never be disturbed.

Jean Mabillon was born at the village of St. Pierre Mont, in Champagne, on the 23rd of November, 1632. His mother did not long survive his birth; but Ruinart congratulates himself on having seen Etienne, the father of Jean, at the age of 105, in the full enjoyment of all his mental and bodily powers. Jean himself was sent by his paternal uncle, the curé of a parish near Rheims, to a college in that city, which, on his return homewards from the Council of Trent, the celebrated Cardinal of Lorraine had founded there for the education of clergymen. The habits of the place well became its origin. Except while addressing their teachers, the pupils passed in profound silence every hour of the day save that of noon; when they amused themselves in a garden, where, as we

read, it was their custom, many hundred times a day, to salute a conspicuous image of the Virgin, with assurances of their veneration and their love.

Whatever may have been the effects of this discipline on the characters of his fellow-students, it moulded the meek and quiet nature of Mabillon into the exact form which the authors of it regarded as the most perfect. He surrendered up his will to theirs; and, yielding his whole soul to the divine offices of his college chapel, became so familiar with them, that when, after an absence of more than fifty years, Ruinart knelt beside him there, he heard the then aged man repeat, from memory, with unerring exactness, every prayer, every ceremonial, and every sacred melody in which he had been accustomed to offer up the devotions of his youth.

In the year 1653, and (to use the chronology of the cloister and of Oxford) on the feast of the Decollation of St. John the Baptist, Mabillon was received as a Postulant at the Benedictine monastery then attached to the cathedral church of St. Remy. In that sublime edifice his imagination had long before been entranced by the anticipated delights of a life of devotional retirement. It had been his single indulgence, while at college, to wander thither that he might listen to the choral strains as they rose, and floated, and died away through the recesses of those long drawn aisles; and there had he often proposed to himself the question, whether this world had anything to offer so peaceful and so pure as an habitual ministration at those hallowed altars, and an unbroken ascent of the heart heavenwards, on the wings of those unearthly psalmodies?

To this inquiry his judgment, or his feelings, still returned the same answer; and, at the end of his novitiate, he gladly pronounced those irrevocable vows which were to exclude him for ever from all delights less elevated than those of a devotional life. He had not, however, long to await the proof that the exclusive use of this ethereal dietary is unfriendly to the health both of these gross bodies of ours, and of the sluggish minds by which they are informed. The flesh revolted; and, to subdue the rebellion, ascetic rigours were required. Then (alas for the bathos!) that base and unfortunate viscus, the stomach, racked his head with insufferable pains. Compelled at length to fly for relief to a Benedictine convent at Nogent, he there soothed his aching brows by traversing, and mourning over, the ruins which the impious ravages of the Huguenots had brought upon the monastic buildings. Then passing, for relief, to another monastery at Corbie, he recovered his health; through the intercession of St.

Adelhard, the patron saint of the place, as he piously believed; though a less perfect faith might have been tempted to ascribe the cure to the active employments in the open air in which the abbot of Corbie compelled him to engage.

With restored health, Mabillon was next transferred, by the commands of his superior, to the royal abbey of St. Denys; there to act as curator of the treasures which the profaneness of a later age has scattered to the winds. This was no light trust. Amidst countless monuments of the illustrious dead, and of the greatness of the French monarchy, the collection contained one of the arms in which the aged Simeon had raised the infant Jesus in the Temple; and the very hand which the sceptical Thomas had stretched out to touch the wounded side of his risen Lord!

It was just one year before the birth of Mabillon, that the congregation of St. Maur had taken possession of the monastery of St. Germain-des-Prés at Paris. At the time of his arrival at St. Denys, Dom Luc d'Achery, a Benedictine monk, was engaged at St. Germain's, in one of those gigantic undertakings to which Benard had invited his fraternity. It was a compilation from the libraries of France of the more rare and valuable letters, poems, charters, and chronicles relating to ecclesiastical affairs, which had been deposited in them either in later or remoter ages. These gleanings (for they were published under the name of *Spicilegium*) extended over thirteen quarto volumes. Such, however, were the bodily infirmities of the compiler, that, during forty-five years he had never been able to quit the infirmary. There he soothed his occasional intermissions of pain and study, by weaving chaplets of flowers for the embellishment of the altars of the church of St. Germain's.

For the relief of this venerable scholar, Mabillon, then in his thirty-fifth year, was withdrawn from his charge of St. Denys to St. Germain's, where he passed the whole of his remaining life in the execution of that series of works which have placed his name at the head of the competitors for the palm of erudition in the most erudite nation of the world, at the period of her greatest eminence in learning. The commencement of his fame was laid in a demeanour still more admirable for self-denial, humility, and lovingkindness. To mitigate the sufferings of D'Achery, and to advance his honour, had become the devoted purpose of his affectionate assistant. Taking his seat at the feet of the old man, Mabillon humoured his weakness, stole away his lassitude, and became at once his servant, his secretary, his friend, and his confessor. From the resources of his far deeper knowledge, guided by his much larger capacity, he enabled D'Achery to complete his

Spicilegium,—generously leaving him in possession of the undivided honour of that contribution to the literary wealth of France.

Nor was this the greatest of the self-sacrifices which he made to gratify the feelings of the aged antiquarian. Benard and the other brethren of the congregation had, from their first settlement at St. Germain's, meditated a complete history of their Order. During forty successive years they had accumulated for the purpose a body of materials of such variety and magnitude as to extinguish the hopes and baffle the exertions of all ordinary men. Having found at length in Mabillon one fitted to 'grapple with whole libraries,' they committed to him the Titanic labour of hewing out of those rude masses an enduring monument to the glory of Benedict and of his spiritual progeny. He undertook the task in the spirit of obedience and of love. In the printed circular letters with which he solicited the aid of the learned, he joined the name of D'Achery to his own; and kept alive the same friendly fiction by uniting their names in the title-page of every volume of the *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Sancti Benedicti* which appeared in D'Achery's lifetime.

The literary annals of France, although abounding in prodigies, record nothing more marvellous than the composition of that book by a single man, in the midst of other labours of almost equal magnitude. From the title alone it might be inferred that it was a mere collection of religious biographies; and, if such had been the fact, they who are the deepest read in Roman Catholic hagiology would probably prefer the perusal of the writers of ordinary romance; since, with less irreverence for sacred things, they are usually more entertaining, and not less authentic. For, in recording the lives of those whom it is the pleasure of the Church to honour, her zealous children regard every incident redounding to their glory, as resting on so firm and broad a basis of antecedent probability, as to supersede the necessity for any positive evidence at all;—nay, as to render impious the questioning of any such testimonies as may happen to be cited, even when they are the most suspicious and equivocal. This argument from probability is especially insisted on, when any such occurrences are alleged as miraculous—that is, as improbable—for, if probable, they cease to be miracles. Of these probable improbabilities, few writers are better persuaded, or more profuse, than Mabillon.

But apart from the extravagancies of his monkish legends, and in despite of them all, Mabillon's book will live in perpetual honour and remembrance as the great and inexhaustible reservoir of knowledge respecting the ecclesiastical, religious, and monastic history of the middle ages; and, therefore, though incidentally, respecting



the secular condition and intellectual character of mankind during that period. In those nine folios lie, in orderly method and chronological arrangement, vast accumulations of authentic facts, of curious documents, and of learned disquisitions; like some rich geological deposit, from which the Genius of history may hereafter raise up and irradiate the materials of a philosophical survey of the institutions, habits, and opinions which have been transmitted from those remote generations to our own. Thence also may be readily disinterred picturesque narratives without end; and inexhaustible disclosures both of the strength and of the weakness of the human heart.

Nor will this knowledge be found in the state of rude and unorganised matter. Mabillon was not a mere compiler; but was also a learned theologian, and a critic and scholar of the first order. When emancipated from the shackles of human authority, he knew how to take a wide survey of the affairs of men, and could sketch their progress from age to age with a free and powerful hand. To each volume which he lived to complete, he attached a prefatory survey of the epoch to which it referred; and those *Prolegomena*, if republished in a detached form, would constitute such a review of the ecclesiastical history of that perplexing period, as no other writer has yet given to the world. It would, indeed, be based throughout upon assumptions which the Protestant Churches with one voice contradict. But if, for the immediate purpose, those assumptions were conceded, the reader of such a work would find himself in possession of all the great controversies which agitated the Christian world during several centuries; and of the best solutions of which they are apparently susceptible. Nor is it an insignificant addition to their other merits, that the Latin in which these ponderous *Tomes* are written, if often such as Cicero would have rejected, is yet better adapted than the purest Ciceronian style, for the easy and unambiguous communication of thought in modern times—the phraseology and the grammar, those of the Court of Augustus; the idioms and structure of the sentences, not seldom those of the Court of Louis Quatorze.

In the reign of that most orthodox Prince, to have given assent to any fact on which the Church had not set the seal of her infallibility was hazardous; much more so to dissent from any fact which her authority had sanctioned. Yet even this heavy charge was preferred against Mabillon by some of his Benedictine brethren, before a general chapter of the Order. Among the saints of whom the fraternity boasted, there were some whose relation to the Order he had disputed; some whose claims to having lived and died in the odour of sanctity he had rejected; some whose very existence

he had denied. So at least we understand the accusation. His antagonists maintained that it was culpable, thus to sacrifice the edification of the faithful to a fastidious regard for historical evidence; and injurious, thus to abandon a part of the glories of their society, which, by mere silence, might have been maintained inviolate. Among those who invoked the censure of their superiors on the reckless audacity of Mabillon's critical inquiries, the foremost was Dom Phillippe Bastide; and to him Mabillon addressed a defence, in every line of which his meekness and his love of truth beautifully balance and sustain each other.

'I have ever been persuaded,' he says, 'that in claiming for their order honours not justly due to it, monastic men offend against the modesty of the Gospel as grievously as any person who arrogates to himself individually a merit to which he is not really entitled. To pretend that this is allowable because the praise is desired, not for the monk himself, but for his order, seems to me no better than a specious pretext for the disguise of vanity. Though disposed to many faults, I must declare that I have ever had an insuperable aversion to this; and that therefore I have been scrupulous in inquiring who are the saints really belonging to my own order. It is certain that some have been erroneously attributed to it, either from the almost universal desire of extolling, without bounds, the brotherhood of which we are members, or on account of some obscurity in the relations which have been already published. The most upright of our writers have made this acknowledgment; nor have the Fathers Yebez and Menard hesitated to reduce the number of our saints by omitting those whom they thought inadmissible. I thought myself also entitled to make a reasonable use of this freedom; though with all the caution which could be reconciled with reverence for truth. I commit the defence of my work to the Divine Providence. It was not of my own will that I engaged on it. My brethren did me the honour to assign the task to me; and if they think it right, I shall cheerfully resign the completion of it to any one whose zeal may be at once more ardent and more enlightened than my own.'

In the Benedictine conclave the cause of historical fidelity triumphed, though not without a long and painful discussion. In proof of the touching candour which Mabillon exhibited as a controversialist, we are told that he spontaneously published one of the many dissertations against his book, to manifest his esteem and affection for the author of it. But before subscribing to this eulogium, one would wish to examine the arrow which he thus winged for a flight against his own bosom. Recluse as he was, he was a Frenchman still: and may have quietly enjoyed a little pleasantry

even at the expense of a friend — for he was a man of a social spirit, and not altogether unskilled in those arts by which society is amused and animated.

The sick chamber of D'Achery was, however, the only *salon* in which he could exert these talents. There, for the gratification of his aged friend, and, doubtless, for his own, he was accustomed on certain evenings to entertain a circle of scholars devoted, like themselves, to antiquarian researches. The hotels of Paris in his days were thronged with more brilliant assemblies, — even as, in our own times, *réunions* of greater aristocratic dignity have adorned that Faubourg of St. Germain in which these gatherings of the learned took place. But neither the Bourbon Lilies nor the Imperial Eagles ever protected a society more distinguished by the extent and depth of the knowledge they were able to interchange. In that ill-furnished dormitory of the decrepid monk, might be seen Du Cange, reposing for a moment from his scrutiny into all the languages and histories of mankind; and Baluze, rich in inexhaustible stores of feudal and ecclesiastical learning; and D'Herbelot, unrivalled in oriental literature; and Fleury, in whom the Church of Rome reveres the most perfect of her annalists; and Adrian de Valois, whose superlative skill in deciphering the remains of the first dynasties of France was so amusingly combined with almost equal skill in finding fault with his own generation, as to provoke an occasional smile even in the most thoughtful of those grave countenances; and, more eminent than all these, Fénelon, then basking in the noon of royal favour, and Bossuet, in the meridian of his genius, both of whom, if not habitual guests at the monastery, lived in an affectionate confidence with Mabillon, which they were unable to maintain with each other.

Nor were these the only relations which he had formed with the world beyond his convent walls. The Jesuits, the Bollandists of Antwerp, and the chroniclers of the Carthusian and Cistercian fraternities, solicited his aid in their various literary pursuits. Leibnitz applied to him for intelligence regarding the House of Brunswick; and even Madame de la Valliere sued for his interest to procure for one of her kindred advancement in that world from which she had herself retired to penitential solitude. Like other luminaries in the same literary firmament, he was now followed by his attendant satellites; nor was his orbit seldom disturbed by the too close vicinity of the bodies amidst which he was constrained to pass.

The theological, or rather the conventual, world was at that time agitated by a controversy, in which the great eulogist of the Benedictine Saints could not have declined to interfere without

some loss of honour, and some abandonment of the cause of which he had become the illustrious advocate. It related to the authorship of the treatise '*De Imitatione Christi*,'—of all uninspired writings incomparably the most popular, if the popularity of books may be inferred from the continuance and extent of their circulation. That it was written, either in the fourteenth, or at the commencement of the fifteenth, century, was a well ascertained fact; and that the author was a monk might be confidently inferred from internal evidence. But was he Thomas à Kempis, one of the regular canons of Mont. St. Agnes, near Zwol? or was he the Benedictine Jean Gersen? This was the point at issue; and with what learning, zeal, and perseverance, it was debated, is well known to all the curious in such matters; and may be learned by others from the notice prefixed by Thuilliers to his edition of the posthumous works of Mabillon. It is only so far as his pen was diverted from its Cyclopean toils by this protracted warfare, that we are concerned with it at present.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, a Flemish printer, then living at Paris (Joducus Badius Ascentius was his Latinised name), published two editions of the '*De Imitatione*,' in which Thomas, of the village of Kemp, in the diocese of Cologne, was, for the first time, announced as the author. Francis de Tol, or Tob, a German, in two other editions, followed this example; and was himself followed by Sommatius, a Jesuit, — in reliance, as he said, on certain manuscripts of the work in the handwriting of Thomas à Kempis, then to be seen at Antwerp and Louvain.

But in the year 1616, Constantine Cajitano, a Benedictine monk, published at Rome another edition, in the title-page of which Gersen was declared to be the author; partly on the authority of a manuscript at the Jesuit's College at Arona, and partly in deference to the judgment of Cardinal Bellarmine.

Round Cajitano rallied all the champions of the Gersenian cause. The partisans of Thomas à Kempis found an equally zealous leader in the person of Rosweid, a Jesuit. Bellarmine, himself a member of the same company, was, as the Kempists maintained, induced by Rosweid to abandon the Gersenian standard. The Benedictines, on the contrary, assert that the Cardinal never deserted it at all, nor ever gave in his adhesion to their adversaries except by pronouncing the words, '*As you will*,' in order to silence the importunities with which the anxious Kempists were disturbing his dying bed.

Whatever the fact may be regarding Bellarmine's latest opinion, the next chieftain who appears on this battle-field is Francis Waldegrave; who, with true English pertinacity and party spirit, traversed the Continent, to bring up to Cajitano a vast reinforce-



ment of manuscripts, pictures, and other proofs collected from all the German, Swiss, and Italian abbeys. Missiles from either side darkened the air; when, between the combatants, appeared the majestic form of Richelieu himself, who, having employed the royal press at the Louvre to print off a new edition of the 'De Imitatione,' enjoyed at once the honour of being solicited by the disputants on either side for his authoritative suffrage, and the pleasure of disappointing both, by maintaining to the last a dignified neutrality.

On the death of Rosweid, the commander of the Kempists, his Bâton passed to Fronteau, a regular canon, who signalled his accession to the command by a work called 'Thomas Vindicatus.' This, for the first time, drew into the field the congregation of St. Maur, who, by their champion Dom Quatremaire, threw down the gauntlet in the form of a pamphlet entitled 'Gersen Assertus.' It was taken up by the Jesuit, George Hesper, the author of what he called 'Dioptra Kempensis.' That blow was parried by Quatremaire, in a publication to which he gave the title of 'Gersen iterum Assertus.' And then the literary combatants were both surprised and alarmed to learn that the Prevôt of Paris considered their feud as dangerous to the peace of that most excitable of cities; and that they could no longer be permitted to shed ink with impunity in the cause of either claimant.

Thus the controversy was transferred to the safe arbitrament of Harlay, the archbishop of that see; who, having no other qualification for the task than the dignity he derived from his mitre, convened at his palace a solemn council of the learned, which, under his own presidency, was to investigate the pretensions of Thomas and of Gersen. Of this conclave Mabillon was a member; and, after much deliberation, they pronounced a sentence which affirmed the title of Gersen to the honour of having written this ever-memorable treatise.

An ultimate appeal to public opinion lies against all adjudications, let who will be the author of them; and in due season the Father Testelette made that appeal against the decision of the archiepiscopal palace, in the form of a book entitled 'Vindiciæ Kempenses,' which drew from Mabillon his 'Animadversiones' on the argument of Testelette. A truce of ten years followed; after which another council was held, under the presidency of Du Cange; and although they pronounced no formal sentence, yet the general inclination and tendency of their opinions appears to have been hostile to the claims of Gersen, — which have ever since been regarded by the best judges with suspicion, if not with disfavour.

Agitated by this vehement dispute, and mourning the silence of her infallible head, the Roman Catholic Church was at length rejoiced to repose in the oracular dictum of St. Francis de Sales, who declared that the authorship was to be ascribed neither to Thomas à Kempis nor to Gersen, but to Him by whose inspiration the Scriptures themselves had been written !

It is probably on account of the darkness of the regions through which they pass, that antiquarians, philologists, and theologians are so much addicted to use their pens as belligerent weapons. Though the most peaceful of mankind, Mabillon, while waging war with the Kempists on one flank, was engaged in a contest not less arduous with the Bollandists on the other. Papebroch, one of the most learned of that learned body, had published a book on the art of verifying the charters and other ancient public acts deposited in the various archives of Europe. In 1681 Mabillon answered him in a treatise '*De Re Diplomaticâ*.' After laying down rules for distinguishing the false instruments from the true, — rules derived from the form of the character, the colour of the ink, the nature of the penmanship, the style and orthography of the instrument, the dates, seals, and subscriptions, — he proceeded to show, by more than 200 examples, how his laws might be applied as a test; and how, by the application of that test, the manuscripts on which Papebroch chiefly relied might be shown to be valueless. Whatever may be thought of the interest of this dispute (which, however, involves questions of the very highest practical importance), no one probably will read with indifference the answer of Papebroch to his formidable antagonist: —

'I assure you,' he says, 'that the only satisfaction which I retain in having written at all on this subject is, that it has induced you to write so consummate a work. I confess that I felt some pain when I first read it, at finding myself refuted in a manner so conclusive. But the utility and the beauty of your treatise have at length got the better of my weakness; and in the joy of contemplating the truth exhibited in a light so transparent, I called on my fellow student here to partake of my own admiration. You need have no difficulty, therefore, in stating publicly, whenever it may fall in your way, that I entirely adopt and concur in your opinions.'

While Papebroch, thus gracefully lowering his lance, retired from the lists, they were entered by Father Germon, another Jesuit; who, armed with two duodecimo volumes, undertook to subvert the new Benedictine science. His main assault was aimed at the assumption pervading Mabillon's book, that the authenticity and the authority of an ancient charter were the same. He sug-

gested that forgery was a very wide-spread art, and had probably flourished with peculiar vigour in remote and ignorant ages. Mabbillon was content to reply that throughout his extensive researches, he had never found a proof of any such imposture. His disciples assailed the sceptical Germon by far more elaborate hostilities. In one form or another the dispute has descended to our own times. At the commencement of it, in the seventeenth century, in France, it yielded (as what French dispute will not yield?) some choice entertainment. The Jesuit, Hardouin, anticipating our contemporary, Strauss, resolved all these ancient instruments, and with them a large part of the remains of antiquity, into so many monkish and mythical inventions. Thus, he declared that the odes of Horace were written in some Benedictine monastery; and that Lalage herself was nothing more than a monkish poetical symbol of the Christian faith. Whither such theories tended Hardouin clearly enough perceived; but he sheltered himself by offering up his thanks to God that he had been denied all human faith, in order (as he said) that the total want of it might improve and strengthen his divine faith. Boileau's remark on the occasion was still better: 'I have no great fancy for monks,' he said, 'yet I should be glad to have known Brother Horace and Dom Virgil.'

Father Anacreon might have been recognised by the great satirist in the person of the reverend Armand Jean le Bouthillier de Rancé, who, having been appointed, at the age of ten, to a canonry at Notre Dame, became, in less than three years afterwards, the author of a new edition of the Anacreontic Odes, — a work of undoubted merit in its way; though it must not be concealed that the young canon was happy in the possession of a learned tutor, as well as of powerful patrons; for Richelieu was his godfather and kinsman, Bossuet his friend, Marie de Medicis his protector, Francis de Harlay (afterwards archbishop of Paris) the associate of his youthful revels, and De Retz his instructor in intrigue and politics. Eminent alike in the field and at the Sorbonne, De Rancé would occasionally throw aside his hunting frock for his cassock, — saying to Harlay, 'Je vais ce matin prêcher comme un ange, ce soir chasser comme un diable.' The pupil of the coadjutor was, of course, however, an eyesore and an offence to Mazarin; and being banished by him to Verret, this venerable archdeacon and doctor in divinity (such were then his dignities) converted his château there into so luxurious a retreat, that the cardinal himself might have looked with envy on the exile.

The spirit of this extraordinary churchman was, however, destined to undergo a change, immediate, final, and complete. De la

Roque relates that having hurried to an interview with a lady of whom he was enamoured, he found her stretched in her shroud — a disfigured corpse. Marsollier's story is that his life was saved by the rebound of a musket-ball from a pouch attached to his shooting belt. It is agreed on all sides that, under the deep emotion excited by some such startling occurrence, he retired from the world, and became first the founder, and then the Abbé of the monastery of La Trappe, of the Cistercian Order, where he remained till his death. During the forty intervening years he was engaged in solving the problem — what are the Maxima of self-inflicted mortifications which, in the transit through this world to the next, it is possible to combine with the Minima of innocent self-gratifications?

While occupied in this rueful inquiry, it happened that De Rancé lighted on a treatise which Mabillon had recently published under the title of '*Traité des Etudes monastiques.*' To M. de la Trappe, it appeared that the book was designed as an indirect attack on himself and his community; and he made his appeal to the world he had abandoned, in a publication, entitled '*Réponse au Traité des Etudes monastiques.*' In reluctant obedience to the commands of his spiritual superiors, Mabillon published '*Réflexions sur la Réponse de M. l'Abbé de la Trappe,*' which drew from De Rancé another volume, entitled '*Eclaircissements sur la Réponse,*' &c.; and there the controversy ended.

When one of two disputants plants his foot on the terra firma of intelligible utility, and the other is upborne by the shifting, dark, and shapeless clouds of mysticism, it is impossible for any witness of the conflict to trace distinctly either the progress or the result of it. It may, however, be in general reported of this debate that, according to the Benedictine arguments, he best employs the leisure of a religious state who most successfully devotes it to the diffusion among mankind of divine and human knowledge: while, according to the Trappist, such labours are at best but the fulfilment of the written, positive, and categorical commands of Scripture or of the Church, — an obedience of incomparably less excellency than that which is due from those communities, or from those individuals, who are called to the state of sinless perfection; for to them it is given, not merely or chiefly to conform to absolute rules of duty, but to listen to those inarticulate suggestions which, from the sanctuary of the Divine presence, descend into the sanctuary of the human heart, and to dwell amidst those elevations of soul to which such heaven-born impulses are designed to conduct them.

They who thus contended could never come within the reach of



each other's weapons. But Mabillon and De Rancé could never get beyond the reach of each other's love. After the close of the debate they met at La Trappe; and separated — not without much unreserved and affectionate intercourse, — each in possession of his own opinion, and of his antagonist's esteem. The sentences of Innocent XII. and Clement XI. awarded the victory to the author of 'Les Etudes monastiques;' and, without the gift of infallibility, the same result might, with safety, have been predicted from the different tempers in which the controversialists had encountered each other. Mabillon descended to the contest in the panoply of a humble, truth-loving spirit. De Rancé (if we may rely on those who knew him well) was not emancipated, even in his retreat, from that enervating thirst for human sympathy which had distinguished him in the world. His disputations and his self-tormentings are both supposed to have been deeply tinged by his constitutional vanity; and it was believed that he would have been far less assiduous in digging his grave and macerating his flesh, if the pilgrimage to La Trappe had not become a rage at Paris; and if the *salons* of that most inquisitive capital had not been so curious for descriptions of that living sepulchre, that the very votaries of pleasure were sometimes irretrievably drawn, by a kind of suicidal fascination, within those gates impervious to all sublunary delights, and scarcely visited by the light of day.

From the depths of his humility Mabillon gathered not only truth, but courage. In his days the altars of the Church were every where hallowed by the relics of saints and martyrs; of which the catacombs at Rome afforded an inexhaustible supply. To watch over this precious deposit, and to discriminate the spurious article from the true, was the peculiar office of a congregation selected for that purpose from the sacred college. But though the skill and the integrity of cardinals were remote from all suspicion, who could answer for the good faith of their subordinate agents, and what was the security that the *Dulia* appropriate to the bones of the blessed might not be actually rendered to the skeletons of the ungodly?

When teaching the art of discriminating between the osseous remains of different mammalia, Cuvier never displayed a more edifying seriousness than was exhibited by Mabillon in laying down the laws which determine whether any given bone belonged of yore to a sinner or a saint. The miracle-working criterion, though apparently the best of all, being rejected silently, and not without very good reasons, Eusebius Romanus (such was his incognito on this occasion) addressed to Theophilus Gallus a letter 'De Cultu Sanctorum ignotorum;' in which he discussed the suffi-

ciency of three other tests. First, he inquired, are we sure of the sanctity of a bone extracted from a sepulchre on which an anagram of the name of Christ is sculptured in the midst of palms and laurels? The answer is discouraging: because it is a well-ascertained fact that the body of one Flavia Jovina was found in this precise predicament, and yet she was a simple neophyte. Then, secondly, are we safe if a vase stained with blood be also found in the tomb? Nothing more secure—if only we could be quite certain that the stain was sanguineous, and was not produced by the perfumes which the ancients were accustomed to heap up in such vessels. But, thirdly, what if the word ‘Martyr’ be engraven on the stone? In that case all doubt would be at an end, were it not for a sophistical doctrine of *equivalents* which the relic dealers have propagated. Thus, for example, at the abbey of St. Martin, at Pontoise, the devout had long been honouring the corpse of one Ursinus, in the quiet belief that the words of his sepulchral inscription were *equivalent* to a declaration of martyrdom, whereas, on inquiry, it turned out that they were really as follows: ‘Here lies Ursinus, who died on the first of June, after living with his wife Leontia 20 years and 6 months, and in the world 49 years, 4 months, and 3 days.’ Thus his only recorded martyrdom was the endurance of Leontia’s conjugal society for twenty years and upwards.

Abandoning then all these guides, whither are we to look for assurance as to the title of a relic to the veneration of the faithful? To this grave inquiry the learned Benedictine gravely answers as follows: Be sure that the alleged saint has been authentically proved to have been a saint. Be sure that his sanctity was established, not merely by baptism, but by some illustrious deeds, attested either by tradition or by certain proofs. Above all, be sure that the apostolic see has ordained that homage be rendered to his remains. Admirable canons, doubtless. Yet to an unenlightened Protestant it would seem that they afford no solution of the problem—Did this very jawbone before which we are kneeling, sustain, while yet in life and action, the teeth of a martyr, or the teeth of one of those by whom martyrs were slain, or the teeth of any one else?

To assert that any such question was debatable at all before the tribunal of human reason, was, however, an overt act of liberalism; which Mabillon was of course required to expiate. Long and anxious were the debates in the congregation of the Index, whether the book should not be condemned, and the temerity of the author rebuked; nor would that censure have been averted but for the interference of the Pope in person; who made himself sponsor for

the willingness of Eusebius to explain in a new edition whatever might be thought objectionable in the first. The pledge was redeemed accordingly; and then the letter ‘*De Cultu Sanctorum ignotorum*’ was not only acquitted of reproach by that sacred College, but even honoured with their emphatic approbation.

Mabillon gave a yet more decisive proof that he was not blinded to truth by any extravagant scepticism. In his days, as in our own, there was living a M. Thiers, a man of singular talents, and of no less remarkable courage; who had accused the Benedictine fathers of Vendôme of an egregious imposture, in exhibiting at their convent one of those tears which fell from the eyes of Jesus when he wept at the grave of Lazarus. An angel (such was the legend) had treasured it up, and given it to Mary, the sister of the deceased. It passed some centuries afterwards to the treasury of relics at Constantinople; and was bestowed by *some* Greek emperor upon *some* German mercenaries in reward for *some* services to his crown. They placed it in the abbey of Frisingen, whence it was conveyed by the emperor Henry III., who transferred it to his mother-in-law, Agnes of Anjou, the foundress of the monastery of Vendôme, where she deposited it. Mabillon threw the shield of his boundless learning round this tradition; maintaining that the genuineness of the relic might at least be reasonably presumed from the admitted facts of the case; that it had a prescriptive claim to the honours it received; and that his brethren ought to be left in peaceable enjoyment of the advantages they derived from the exhibition in their church at Vendôme of the Holy Tear of Bethany.

Passing from fables too puerile for the nursery, to inquiries which have hitherto perplexed the senate, Mabillon undertook to explain the right principles of Prison Discipline, in a work entitled ‘*Réflexions sur les Prisons des Ordres Religieux*.’ He insisted, that by a judicious alternation and mixture of solitude, labour, silence, and devotion, it was practicable to render the gaol a school for the improvement of its unhappy inmates in social arts and in moral character. After discussing to what extent solitary confinement would be consistent with the mental and bodily health of the sufferers, and how far the rigour of punishment ought to be mitigated by exercise and active employments, he concludes as follows:—

‘To return to the prison of St. Jean Climaque. A similar place might be established for the reception of penitents. There should be in such a place several cells like those of the Chartreux, with a workshop, in which the prisoners might be employed at some useful work. To each cell also might be attached a little

garden, to be thrown open to the prisoner at certain hours, for the benefit of labour, and exercise in the open air. They should attend public worship, at first in a separate lodge or compartment, and afterwards in the choir with the congregation at large, so soon as they should have passed the earlier stages of penal discipline, and given proofs of penitence. Their diet should be coarse and poor, and their fasts frequent. They should receive frequent exhortation, and the master of the gaol, either in person or by deputy, should from time to time see them in private, at once to console and to strengthen them. Strangers should not be permitted to enter the place, from which all external society should be strictly excluded. Once establish this, and so far from such a retirement appearing horrible and insupportable, I am convinced that the greater number of the prisoners would scarcely regret their confinement, even if it were for life. I am aware that all this will be considered as a vision of some new Atlantis: but let the world say or think what it may, it would be easy to render prisons more tolerable and more useful, if men were but disposed to make the attempt.'

So wrote a Benedictine monk in the age and kingdom of Louis XIV. The honour which one of his biographers, M. de Malan, challenges for him, of being the very earliest of those who have addressed themselves to this difficult subject in the spirit of philanthropy and wisdom, is strictly his due. To the enlightened reformer of prisons may be cheerfully forgiven his sacred osteology, and even his defence of the Holy Tear of Vendôme. Though in bondage to the prejudices of his own age, he was able to break through the bonds which have shackled so many powerful minds in later and more enlightened times.

In the midst of these and similar employments, Mabillon had reached his sixty-second year, but the great project of his life was still unfinished and unattempted. In the belief that the end of his days was drawing near, he desired to consecrate them to a devout preparation for death. But being roused to the task by the instances of Renaudôt and Baluze, and his affectionate pupil Ruinart, he engaged, with all the ardour of youth, in collecting materials for his long-meditated history of the Benedictine Order. In studying and methodising the vast collections at his disposal, the aged scholar displayed, though without a shade of scepticism, an acuteness which the subtlest sceptic might have envied, and, without a tinge of philosophy, a luminousness of mind worthy of the most illustrious philosopher.

At that period the more ardent sons of the Church regarded her as no less infallible when she asserted historical facts, than when



she proclaimed dogmatic truths. On the other hand, the Centurionators of Magdeburgh, Du Pin, Richard Simon, and even the great Arnould, had presumed to interrogate ecclesiastical traditions, and to controvert the authority of popes and synods, fathers and saints, whenever it touched on topics beyond the articles of the Christian faith. This audacious freedom was rebuked by the contemptuous and withering eloquence of Bossuet; and Mabillon presented himself as the great living model of an historian, employing the most profound and varied knowledge, under the severe restraints of this intellectual docility. By day and by night he laboured, during the last fourteen years of his life, on the annals of his Order; without so much as a solitary departure from the implicit submission which he yielded to the Church, as to all matters of fact attested either by her own authoritative voice, or by the decision of her accredited doctors. The result was, that, instead of a history of what had actually occurred, he produced a chronicle, from which it may be learnt what are the occurrences, the belief of which the Church has sanctioned, or has silently left to the investigation of her obedient annalists.

It is, however, a book which irresistible evidence establishes, and which, without such evidence, could not be believed to be the work of a single man between his sixty-second and seventy-sixth years. It comprises a biography of the Benedictine saints in a form more compendious than that of his *Acta Sanctorum*. It contains an account of every other illustrious member of the Order. It includes a careful review of every book written by any eminent Benedictine author. All the grants and charters under which the property and privileges of their monasteries were held, are recapitulated and abridged in it. Finally, it embraces a description of all their sepulchral and other ancient monuments.

Five folio volumes of this vast compilation were finished, and the last was about to appear, when the life and labours of Mabillon were brought to a painful and a sudden, though not an immature termination. Ruinart meditated, though in vain, the completion of the work. He lifted (perhaps unwisely) the veil which would otherwise have concealed the last fearful agonies of its great author. He has, however, shown, with the most artless and genuine pathos, how the tortures of the body were soothed and dignified by the faith, the hope, and the serenity of soul of the sufferer. With no domestic ties, and no worldly ambition to bind him to earth, and with no anxious forebodings to overcast the prospect before him, he entertained the last enemy as a messenger of good tidings, and a herald of approaching joy and freedom; and then breathed out his spirit in an unhesitating affiance on

Him, whom, beneath the shade of many superstitions, and the burden of many errors, he had loved, and trusted, and obeyed from childhood to the grave.

Mabillon was a perfect model of monastic perfection ; and however much inferior the produce of the conservatory may be to those hardier plants which germinate amidst the frosts and the scorchings of the unsheltered day, yet they have a value and a delicacy peculiarly their own. He had quitted the world without a sigh, and probably never breathed a sigh to return to it. If compelled to revisit and to tread the highways of mankind, he would have resembled the lifelong prisoner of an aviary, driven out to the bleak uplands for shelter. Meekly bowing his head to 'Holy Obedience,' he yielded himself without reluctance, to be moulded into whatever form that Genius of the place might prescribe. Nor was this a painful sacrifice. The graces of the cloister, — docility, devotion, and self-discipline, — were his by an antenatal predestination. Mabillon lived and died in an uninterrupted subjection to positive laws and forms of man's devising. Even in his interior life, rule and habit exercised an inflexible dominion over him. He worshipped indeed with fervent piety ; but with such a mechanical exactness of ceremonial, of time, and of place, as might seem, to a careless self-observer, fatal to the life of spiritual exercises. To his daily routine of divine offices were added other forms of private worship, scarcely less immutable ; of which some were appropriate to his entrance on any literary work, — some to the arrival of the first proof sheet from the press, — and some to the commencement of the studies of each succeeding day.

To this constitutional and acquired acquiescence in the will of his superiors and the rules of his convent, was added the most profound lowliness of spirit. 'Permit me, Sire,' said Le Tellier, the archbishop of Rheims, to Louis XIV., 'to present to your Majesty Dom Mabillon, the most learned man in your Majesty's dominions.' 'Sire,' rejoined Bossuet, who stood by, 'the archbishop might also have said the most humble man in France.' It is supposed that the plumage of the eagle of Meaux was not a little ruffled by the superlative adjective which derogated from his own claims to the first place among men of learning. But the applauses both of the archbishop and of the bishop, in whatever temper given, were perfectly just. The proofs of Mabillon's learning are, at this moment, among the noblest monuments of the age of Louis XIV. The proofs which his eulogists adduce of his humility have not been very judiciously selected.

A humble man is one who, thinking of himself neither more highly nor more lowly than he ought to think, passes a true judg-

ment on his own character. But the great Benedictine neither entertained nor suggested a truth; when among titled men, and learned men, and superficial pretenders to knowledge, he bore himself as if he had been undeserving of their notice, and unworthy to communicate with them on equal terms. There is no genuine self-abasement apart from a lofty conception of our own destiny, powers, and responsibilities; and one of the most excellent of human virtues is but poorly expressed by an abject carriage. Torpid passions, a languid temperament, and a feeble nature, may easily produce that false imitation of humility; which, however, in its genuine state, will ever impart elevation to the soul and dignity to the demeanour. This part of Mabillon's portrait has been ill drawn; because the artists drew rather from a false image in their own minds, than from the great original.

In the conventual merit of bodily self-discipline, so far as it could be reconciled with his studious habits, Mabillon was emulous of the Trappists. His food, sleep, clothing, warmth, social intercourse, and other personal gratifications, were measured by the indispensable exigencies of nature; and his admirers describe his austere mortifications of the flesh with the fond delight of a Hindoo recounting his sacred legends of the spontaneous endurance of more than human sufferings. 'Holy Obedience' dictated to her favourite child abasements and self-denials, which it is difficult to reconcile with decorum or with sincerity. If she had been wise, she would have summoned him to the nobler office of asserting that intellectual rank, and those claims to the reverence of mankind which, like all the other good gifts of Providence, are designed for noble uses by the wise and gracious Author of them all.

Although the virtues of the convent, even in the person of Mabillon, excite but a reluctant admiration, and a still colder sympathy, yet his simple tastes, his devout spirit, and his affectionate nature, would, under a more genial discipline, have rendered his character as lovely as his diligence, his critical sagacity, and the extent of his knowledge were wonderful. For, soaring, in these respects, immeasurably above vulgar ascetics, he obeyed to the letter the command of his great patriarch Benedict, and devoted every moment of his life to some useful and energetic occupation.

In these pursuits Mabillon was not merely an indefatigable student, but a laborious traveller. In his time the treasures of which he was insatiably covetous were not accumulated in the Royal Library of Paris, but dispersed in the conventual, episcopal, and other public archives of France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy. The journeys necessary for examining them had all the

terrors of an exploration of the Nile to one whom (all Frenchman as he was) not even the enchanted gardens and terraces of Versailles had, during a period of twenty years, been able to seduce, for a single morning, from his seclusion at St. Germain-des-Prés. But what antiquarian worthy of the name would be arrested by the Loire, the Meuse, the Rhine, or the Alps, when beyond these distant barriers a whole harem of virgin manuscripts wooed his embrace, glowing, like so many houris, with immortal youth, and rich in charms which increased with each revolving century? Sometimes alone, but more commonly attended by a Benedictine brother, he accomplished several *Capitulary* or *Diplomatic* tours through Flanders, Burgundy, Switzerland, the south of Germany, and the whole of the Italian peninsula. The earlier of those expeditions were made on foot, at the cost of his Order; the latter with the equipages becoming an agent of the Grand Monarque, employed by Colbert to collect or to transcribe manuscripts for his royal master. The results of these expeditions were various learned itineraries (such as his ‘*Iter Burgundicum*’ and his ‘*Museum Italicum*’), and a prodigious accession to the wealth of the royal library. His services were rewarded by Louis with a seat in the Academy of Belles Lettres and Inscriptions. But the whole republic of letters united to confer on the learned traveller honours far exceeding any at the disposal of the greatest of the kings of the earth.

His journeys, especially his Italian journey, resembled royal progresses rather than the unostentatious movements of a humble monk. Monasteries contended for the honour of entertaining him as their guest. Fêtes celebrated his arrival in the greater cities of Italy. His society and correspondence were courted by the learned, the great, and the fair. The Pope, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Cardinals, and Queen Christina, vied in rendering courtesies to their illustrious visitor. At the Catacombs, at Loretto, at Clairvaux, and, above all, at Monte Casino, the devout assembled to witness and to partake of his devotions. All libraries flew open at his approach; nor did the revolutionary *sçavans* of France traverse the same regions, or examine the same repositories with an authority comparable to that of the poor Benedictine, as he moved from one Italian state to another,—powerless except in the lustre of his reputation, the singleness of heart with which he pursued his object, and the love with which he was regarded by all his associates.

In M. Valéry’s three volumes will be found an ample and curious diary of Mabillon’s Italian expedition. He commenced it on the 1st of April, 1685, having selected as his companion Dom Michel



Germain, another member of the congregation of St. Maur. Germain had himself written some essays on monastic history; but his chief title to literary honours was derived from his having ministered to the production of the ‘*Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*,’ and of the treatise ‘*De Re Diplomaticâ*.’

The travellers had engaged to maintain a correspondence with three of their monastic associates. One of these was the faithful and affectionate Ruinart, of whom we already know something. Placide Porcheron, the next, seems to have been a member of the Dryasdust family, so celebrated by Walter Scott and Thomas Carlyle; his two great performances being a commentary on an obscure geographical book of the seventh century, and notes on a treatise on Education written by Basil the Macedonian, who, two hundred years later, had been Emperor of the Greeks. Claude Bretagne, the third of the Committee of Correspondence at Paris, was the author of some devotional works, but was more eminent as the intimate friend of Nicole, and as a companion of infinite grace and wit, and of the most captivating discourse. It was arranged that letters should be addressed to Charles Bulteau also, who was not a monk, but ‘*Doyen des Secretaires du Roi*,’ and was famous for having, in that capacity, vindicated, with great learning, the supremacy of the King of France over the sovereigns of the Spanish monarchies.

When devout men, profound scholars, or still more profound antiquaries, engage in a prolonged epistolary intercourse, the reader is not without preconceptions of the mental aliment awaiting him. He has probably gone through some volumes in which Protestant divines interchange their religious experiences. The style in which Salmasius, Budæus, and Scaliger entertained their friends is not wholly unknown to him; and how the Spelmaus of old, and the Whitakers of recent times, wrote their letters, may be learnt at the expense of a transient fatigue. But let no one address himself to M. Valery’s volumes, with the hope or the fear of being involved in any topics more sacred, more crabbed, or more antiquated than befits an easy chair, a winter’s evening, and a fireside. Reading more pleasant, or of easier digestion, is hardly to be met with in the Parisian epistles of Grimm, Diderot, or La Harpe.

Our pilgrims first take up the pen at Venice. They had ransacked the Ambrosian Library, examined the Temple of Venus at Brescia, admired the amphitheatre at Verona, and visited the monastery of their order at Vicenza; though, observes Germain, ‘*Ni là ni ailleurs, nos moines ne nous ont pas fait goûter de leur vin.*’ Some gentlemen of the city having conducted them over it, ‘*On ne saurait,*’ adds he, ‘*faire attention sur le mérite et les manières*

honnêtes de ces messieurs, sans réfléchir sur nos moines et admirer leur insensibilité. Aussi n'étudient ils pas; ils disent matins avant souper; ils mangent gras; portent du linge, pour ne rien dire du *peculium*, et de leur sortie seuls.' In short, there is already peeping out, from behind our good Germain's cowl, one of those Parisian countenances on the quick movable lines of which flashes of subacid merriment are continually playing.

On reaching Florence the migratory antiquarians form a new acquaintance, alike singular and useful, in the person of Magliabechi, the librarian of the Grand Duke. Another man at once so book-learned, so dirty, and so ill-favoured, could not have been found in the whole of Christendom. The Medicæan Library was his study, his refectory, and his dormitory; though, except in the depth of winter, he saved the time of dressing and undressing, by sleeping in his clothes and on his chair; his bed serving the while as an auxillary book-stand. Fruit and salads were his fare; and when sometimes an anchovy was served up with them, the worthy librarian, in an absent mood, would not unfrequently mistake, and use it for sealing-wax. Partly from want of time, and partly from the consciousness that an accurate likeness of him would be a caricature on humanity at large, he would never allow his portrait to be taken; though what the pencil was not permitted to do, the pens of his acquaintance have so attempted, that he would have judged better in allowing the painter to do his worst. Michel Germain describes him as 'Varillas multiplied by three.' Now Menage tells us that happening once to say that every man was hit off by some passage or other in Martial, and having been challenged to prove it with respect to Varillas, the most slovenly scholar of his acquaintance, he immediately quoted '*Dinidiasque nates Gallica palla tegit.*' Short indeed, then, must have been the skirts of Magliabechi, according to Germain's arithmetic.

His bibliographical appetite and digestion formed, however, a psychological phenomenon absolutely prodigious. Mabillon called him '*Museum inambulans, et viva quædam bibliotheca.*' Father Finardi, with greater felicity, said of him, '*Is unus bibliotheca magna,*' that being the anagram of his Latinised name, Antonius Magliabechius.

Having established a correspondence with this most learned savage, the Benedictines proceeded to Rome, where they were welcomed by Claude Estiennot, the procurator of their Order at the Papal court. He also devoted his pen to their entertainment. Light labour for such a pen! within eleven years he had collected and transcribed forty-five bulky folios, at the various libraries of his society in the several dioceses of France, adding to them, says

Dom Le Cerf, 'réflexions très sensées et judicieuses;' a praise which probably no other mortal was ever able to gainsay or to affirm.

Germain found Rome agitated with the affair of the Quietists. His account of the dispute is rather facetious than theological. Just then a Spaniard had been sent to the galleys, and a priest to the gallows; the first for talking, and the second for writing scandals, while the great Quietist Molinos was in the custody of the Inquisition. Marforio, says Germain, is asked by Pasquin why are you leaving Rome, and answers, 'Chi parla è mandato in galera; chi scrive è impiccato; chi sta quieto va al sant' officio.' Marforio had good cause for his hurry; for the scandal which (as Germain pleasantly has it) 'broke the priest's neck' was merely his having said that 'the mare had knocked the snail out of its shell;' in allusion to the fact of the Pope's having been forced out of his darling seclusion and repose, to be present at a certain festival, at which a mare or palfrey was also an indispensable attendant. 'The rogues continue to repeat the jest notwithstanding,' observes the reverend looker-on.

He gathered other pleasant stories, at the expense of his Holiness and these heretical aspirants after a devotional repose of the soul. Some of them are not quite manageable in our most fastidious times, without the aid of a thicker veil than he chose to employ. For example, he tells of a Quietist bishop who, to escape an imaginary pursuit of the police, scaled the roof of his mansion in his night-dress, and so, running along the tops of the adjacent houses, unluckily made his descent through one of them, into which he could not have entered, even in full canonicals and in broad day, without a grievous damage to his reputation. Then follows a fine buffo catastrophe, and when (says Germain) 'the whole reaches the ears of Nostro Signore, the holy man has a good laugh, and orders the bishop to quit Rome without delay.' Yet Germain himself breaks out into hot resentment against 'the wretched and abandoned Molinos,' and proposes to Magliabechi (in seeming seriousness) to arrest the progress of the evil, by publishing a manuscript discovered in their Italian tour, from which it would appear that the bones of a wicked Bohemian lady, of the name of Guillemine, who, three centuries before, had propagated nearly the same enormities, were at length taken, with public execration, out of her grave, and scattered to the winds.

Molinos, however, was strong in the protection of Christina, who then dwelt at Rome. Her abandonment of the faith of her illustrious father, was accepted there, not only as a cover for a multitude of sins, but as an apology for the assumption of an independent

authority beneath the very shadow of the Vatican. Mabillon, accompanied by Germain, presented to her his book ‘De Liturgiâ Gallicanâ,’ in which, to her exceeding discontent, she found herself described as ‘Serenissima.’ ‘My name,’ she exclaimed, ‘is Christina. That is eulogy enough. Never again call me, and admonish your Parisians never to call me, Serenissima.’ Germain left her with the fullest conviction that the epithet was altogether out of place; but ‘after all,’ he says, ‘she gave us free access to her library,—the best thing she could do for us.’ So great were her privileges, or such the weakness of the lazy Innocent XI., that, as we learn from these letters, an offender on his way to prison, having laid hold on the bars of one of her windows as a sanctuary, was violently rescued by her servants, whereupon they were tried and sentenced to be hanged. Christina wrote to the judge to inform him, that if her servants died any other than a natural death, *they should not die alone!* The judge complained to the Pope; but his Holiness laughed at the affair, and terminated it by sending her Majesty a peace-offering, which she contemptuously handed over to the complainant.

Germain looked upon the religious observances of Rome with the eye of a French encyclopediste. He declares that the Romans burn before the Madonna, and in their churches, more oil than the Parisians both burn and swallow. ‘Long live St. Anthony!’ he exclaims, as he describes the horses, asses, and mules, all going, on the saint’s festival, to be sprinkled with holy water, and to receive the benediction of a reverend father. ‘All would go to ruin, say the Romans, if this act of piety were omitted. So nobody escapes paying toll on this occasion, not Nostro Signore himself.’ Then follows an account of a procession to St. Peter’s, on the reception of certain new converts, which is compressed into a single paragraph purposely long, intricate, and obscure; ‘a sentence,’ says Germain, ‘which I have drawn out to this length to imitate the ceremony itself.’ Soon after we meet him at the cemetery of Pontianus, ‘where,’ he observes with all the mock gravity of Bayle, ‘there lie 50,263 martyrs, without counting the women and children. Each of us was allowed to carry off one of these holy bodies. That which fell to my share had been too big for the hole in which it was found. I had infinite trouble in disinterring it, for it was quite wet, and the holy bones were all squeezed and jammed together. I am still knocked up with the labour.’

The Pope himself fares no better than the ceremonies and relics of his church. ‘If I should attempt,’ he says, ‘to give you an exact account of the health of his Holiness, I must begin with Ovid, “In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas.” At ten he



is sick, at fifteen well again, at eighteen eating as much as four men, at twenty-four dropsical. They say he has vowed never to leave his room. If so, M. Struse declares that he can never get a dispensation, not even from himself, as his confinement will be, *de jure divino*. The unpleasant part of the affair is, that they say he has given up all thoughts of creating new cardinals, forgetting in his restored health the scruples he felt when sick; like other great sinners.'

Indolent and hypochondriacal as he was, Innocent XI. had signalised himself, not only by the virtues which Burnet ascribes to him in his travels, but by two remarkable edicts. One of them, which could not be decorously quoted, regulated the appearance on the stage of certain classes of singers; the other, (under the penalties of six days' excommunication, and of incapacity for absolution, even in the article of death, save from the Pope himself,) commanded all ladies to wear up to their chins, and down to their wrists, draperies *not* transparent. 'The Queen of Spain,' says our facetious Benedictine, 'immediately had a new dress made, and sent it to her nuncio at Rome, to ascertain whether it tallied exactly with the ordinance: for,' he continues (the inference is not very clear), 'one must allow that Spanish ladies have not as much delicacy as our own.'

He has another story for the exhilaration of St. Germain-des-Prés, at the expense of both pope and cardinals. A party of the sacred college were astounded, after dinner, by the appearance of an austere Capuchin, who, as an unexpected addition to their dessert, rebuked their indolence and luxury, and their talkativeness even during High Mass. Then, passing onwards to an inner chamber, the preacher addressed his Holiness himself, on the sin of an inordinate solicitude about health — no inappropriate theme; for he was lying in the centre of four fires, and beneath the load of seven coverlets, having recently sustained a surgical operation; on which Germain remarks, that if it had taken place in summer, 'it would have been all up with the holy man.'

The Jesuits of course take their turn. At the table of the Cardinal Estrées, Mabillon and Germain meet the Father Couplet, who had passed thirty years in China. 'I do not know,' says Germain, 'whether he was mandarin and mathematical apostle at the same time; but he told us that one of his brethren was so eminent an astrologer as to have been created a mandarin of the third class. He said that another of them was raising himself by contemplation to the third heaven, before actually going there. I have my doubts about his success. However, Father Couplet told us that he had a very numerous *Chrétienté*. 'My *Chrétienté*,' he

frequently said, 'consists of more than 30,000 souls.' Do you believe his story, that there are forty millions of inhabitants in Pekin, and from two to three hundred millions in China at large? I do not.'

This keen observer is not silent on the cold reception at Rome of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The arrogant claims of Louis XIV. on behalf of the Gallican Church and Crown had abated much of the enthusiasm with which the measure would otherwise have been hailed. 'Well,' observes Germain (one can see the rising of his shoulders as he writes), 'a hundred years ago they took a very different tone about the Huguenots. They not only offered public thanksgiving on their massacre by Charles IX., but hung the walls of the royal hall in the Vatican with pictures of the murder of Coligny and of the butcheries of St. Bartholomew. They still form its chief ornaments.'

Even when accompanying Mabillon on a pilgrimage to the cradle of their Order at Monte Casino, Germain looks about him with the same esprit fort. 'At the foot of the mountain,' he says, 'we found an inn, where we learned to fast, as we got nothing but some cabbages which I could not eat, some nuts, and one apple for our supper. Then we paid thirty francs for a wretched bed, which we divided between us, in the midst of bugs and fleas.' On the next day they luckily fell in with the vicar-general of the Barnabites, a Frenchman, from whom (he says) 'we got some cheese and preserves, and, finally, a glass of Lachryma; as he told us, to strengthen the stomach.' Reaching at length the mansion of the abbé of Monte Casino, he made a fête for us, and bore witness to our excellent appetites.'

Mabillon's devotion at the tomb of his patriarch is described as deep, fervent, and protracted. Germain sends to their friend Porcheron a picturesque account of the dress and aspect of the monks, an enthusiastic description of the library, a very pretty sketch of the adjacent country, with a graphic representation of the church and the ceremonial observed in it; and promises his correspondent 'to say a mass for him at the foot of Benedict's tomb.' With the exception of that assurance (whether grave or gay it is not easy to determine), the whole letter might have been written by Miss Martineau, and would have done no discredit even to her powers of converting her readers into her fellow-travellers.

Such of the letters comprised in this collection as are written by Mabillon himself, relate exclusively to the duties of his mission; and are grave and simple, though perhaps too elaborately courteous. In the last volume are some contributions from Quesnel, whose singular fate it is to have been censured by the Pope, Clement XI.,

and eulogised by De Rancé the Trappist, by La Chaise the Jesuit, by Voltaire the Wit, and by Cousin the Philosopher. The pleasantries of Michel Germain and the freedoms of Estiennot are far from being the best things in M. Valéry's book. We have selected them rather as being the most apposite to our immediate purpose.

In this correspondence three of the most eminent of the congregation of St. Maur transmit from Italy such intelligence and remarks as appear to them best adapted to interest other three of the most eminent of their brotherhood at Paris. If the table-talk of the refectory at St. Germain-des-Prés was of the same general character, the monks there had no better title to the praise of an ascetic social intercourse, than the students or the barristers in the halls of Christ Church, or of Lincoln's Inn. It would be difficult to suppose an appetite for gossip more keen, or more luxuriously gratified.

The writers and the receivers of these letters were all men devoted by the most sacred vows to the duties of the Christian priesthood; yet in a confidential epistolary intercourse, extending through eighteen successive months, no one of them utters a sentiment, or discusses a question, from which it could be gathered that he sustained any religious office, or seriously entertained any religious belief whatever. It may be that our Protestant divines occasionally transgress the limits within which modesty should confine the disclosure, even to the most intimate friends, of the interior movements of a devout spirit. But all reverence to the memory of our Doddridges and Howes, our Venns and Newtons! whose familiar letters, if sometimes chargeable with a failure in that graceful reserve, yet always glow with a holy unction, and can at least never be charged with the frigid indifference which these learned Benedictines exhibit on the subjects to which they had all most solemnly devoted their talents and their lives.

Visiting, for the first time, the places which they regard as the centre of Christian unity, as the seat of apostolic dominion, as the temple towards which all the churches of the earth should worship, as the ever salient fountain of truth, and as the abode of him who impersonates to his brother men the Divine Redeemer of mankind, not a solitary word of awe or of tenderness falls from their pens—not a fold of those dark tunics is heaved by any throb of grateful remembrance or of exulting hope. They could not have traversed Moscow or Amsterdam with a more imperturbable phlegm; nor have sauntered along the banks of the Seine or the courts of the Louvre in a temper more perfectly debonnaire.

Protestant zeal may be sometimes rude, bitter, and contumelious

in denouncing Roman Catholic superstitions. It is a fault to be sternly rebuked. But how adequately censure these reverend members of that communion, who, without one passing sigh, or one indignant phrase, depict the shameful abuses of the holiest offices of their Church, with cold sarcasms and heartless unconcern!

Rome combated her Protestant antagonists by the aid of the Jesuits in the world, and of the Benedictines in the closet. Yet to those alliances she owes much of the silent revolt against her authority which has characterised the last hundred years; and of which the progress is daily becoming more apparent. The Jesuits involved her in their own too well merited disesteem. The Benedictines have armed the philosophy both of France and Germany with some of the keenest weapons by which she has been assailed. It was an ill day for the papacy, when the congregation of St. Maur, at the instance of Benard, called the attention of their fellow-countrymen to the mediæval history of the Church, and invited the most enlightened generation of men whom Europe had ever seen, to study and believe a mass of fables of which the most audacious Grecian mythologist would have been ashamed, and at which the credulity of a whole college of augurs would have staggered.

It was but a too prolific soil on which this seed was scattered. At the moment when, in the integrity of his heart, Mabillon was propagating these legends, the walls of his monastery were often passed by a youth, whose falcon eye illuminated with ceaseless change one of the most expressive countenances in which the human soul had ever found a mirror. If the venerable old man had foreseen how that eye would one day traverse his Benedictine annals, in a too successful search for the materials of the most overwhelming ridicule of all which he held holy, he would cheerfully have consigned his unfinished volumes, and with them his own honoured name, to oblivion. Not so would Michel Germain, Claude Estiennot, and the brethren for whose amusement they wrote, have contemplated, if they could have foreknown, the approaching career of the young Arouet. Though they clung to the Church of Rome with all the ardour of partisans, and though their attachment to her was probably sincere, their convictions must have been faint, unripe, and wavering. The mists of doubt, though insufficient to deprive them of their faith in Christianity, had struck a damp and abiding chill into their hearts. If they had lived long enough to know the patriarch of Ferney, they would have been conscious of the close affinity between his spirit and their own.

How could it have been otherwise? From disinterring legends



and traditions revolting to their hearts and understandings, they passed to Rome, there to disinter foul masses of holy bones, to contemplate sacred processions of mules and asses, to find a corpulent self-indulgent valetudinarian sustaining the character of the vicar of Christ, and to discover that the basest motives of worldly interest dictated to the papal court the decisions for which they dared to claim a divine impulse and a divine infallibility. From such follies and such pretensions these learned persons turned away with immeasurable contempt. The freedom of thought which unveiled to them these frauds, left them disgusted with error, but did not carry them forward to the pursuit of truth. Without the imbecility to respect such extravagances, they were also without the courage to denounce and repudiate them. Their superior light taught them to expose and ridicule religious error; — it did not teach them to embrace unwelcome truth. In that book which is ‘the religion of Protestants,’ they might have read that ‘the light is the life of men,’ — that is, of men who obey and follow its guidance. There also they might have learned that ‘the light which is in us may be darkness,’ — that is, may at once illuminate the inquisitive intellect, and darken the insensible heart. The letters which they have bequeathed to us, interesting as they are in other respects, afford melancholy proof how deeply the younger Benedictines of the congregation of St. Maur were already imbued with the spirit of that disastrous philosophy, which was destined, before the lapse of another century, to subvert the ancient institutions of their native land, and with them, the venerable fabric of their own illustrious Order.

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## THE PORT-ROYALISTS.

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ALL religions, and all ages, have their saints; their men of un-earthly mould; self-conquerors; sublime even in their errors; not altogether hateful in their very crimes. If a man would understand the dormant powers of his own nature, let him read the *Acta sanctorum*. Or, if 'too high this price of knowledge,' let him at least acquaint himself with the legends of the later heroes of the Gallican Church. Of all ascetics they were the least repulsive. They waged war on dulness with the ardour of Dangeau and St. Simon, and with still better success. While macerating their bodies in the cloisters of Port-Royal, they did not cease to be French men and French women of the Augustan age. While practising the monastic virtue of silence, their social spirit escaped this unwelcome restraint, in a body of Memoirs as copious as those which record the splendour and the miseries of Versailles. A rapid sketch of the substance of those monastic chronicles, may not be without its use in directing the attention of our readers to one of the most remarkable episodes in ecclesiastical history.

He whose journey lies from Versailles to Chevreuse, will soon find himself at the brow of a steep cleft or hollow, intersecting the monotonous plain across which he has been passing. The brook which winds through the verdant meadows beneath him, stagnates into a large pool, reflecting the mutilated Gothic arch, the water-mill, and the dovecot, which rise from its banks; with the farmhouse, the decayed towers, the forest trees, and innumerable shrubs and creepers which clothe the slopes of the valley. France has many a lovelier prospect, though this is not without its beauty; and many a field of more heart-stirring interest, though this, too, has been ennobled by heroic daring; but through the length and breadth of that land of chivalry and of song, the traveller will in vain seek a spot so sacred to genius, to piety, and to virtue. That arch is all which remains of the once crowded monastery of Port-Royal. In those woods Racine first learned the language—the universal language—of poetry. Under the roof of that humble

farmhouse, Pascal, Arnauld, Nicole, De Saci, and Tillemont, meditated those works, which, as long as civilisation and Christianity survive, will retain their hold on the gratitude and reverence of mankind. There were given innumerable proofs of the graceful good humour of Henry IV. To this seclusion retired the heroine of the Fronde, Ann Genevieve, Duchess of Longueville, to seek the peace which the world could not give. Madame de Sevigné discovered here a place ‘tout propre à inspirer le désir de faire son salut.’ From the Petit Trianon and Marly, there came hither to worship God, many a courtier and many a beauty, heartbroken or jaded with the very vanity of vanities—the idolatry of their fellow mortals. Survey French society in the seventeenth century from what aspect you will, it matters not, at Port-Royal will be found the most illustrious examples of whatever imparted to that motley assemblage any real dignity or permanent regard. Even to the mere antiquarian, it was not without a lively interest.

At the eve of his departure to the conquest of the Holy Sepulchre, the good knight, Matthieu de Marli, cast a wistful gaze over the broad lands of his ancestors, and entrusted to his spouse, Mathilde de Garlande, the care of executing some work of piety by which to propitiate the Divine favour, and to insure his safe return. A Benedictine monastery, for the reception of twelve ladies of the Cistercian order, was accordingly erected, in imitation of the Cathedral at Amiens, and by the same architect. Four centuries witnessed the gradual increase of the wealth and splendour of the foundation. Prelates of the houses of Sully and Nemours enlarged its privileges. Pope Honorius III. authorised the celebration of the sacred office within its walls, even though the whole country should be lying under a papal interdict; and of the host consecrated on the profession of a nun, seven fragments might be solemnly confided to her own keeping, that, for as many successive days, she might administer to herself the holy sacrament. Yet how arrest by spiritual immunities the earthward tendency of all sublunary things? At the close of the reign of Henry IV., the religious ladies of Port-Royal had learned to adjust their ‘robes à grandes manches’ to the best advantage. Promenades by the margin of the lake relieved the tedium of monastic life. Gayer strains of music than those of the choir might be heard from the adjacent woods; and if a cavalier from Paris or Chevreuse had chanced to pursue his game that way, the fair musicians were not absolutely concealed nor inexorably silent. So lightly sat the burden of their vows on those amiable recluses, that the gayest courtier might well covet for his portionless daughter the rank of their lady abbess.

Such at least was the judgment of M. Marion. He was advocate-general to Henry IV., and maternal grandfather of Jaqueline Marie Angelique, and of Agnes Arnauld. Jobbing is not one of the arts to the invention of which the moderns may lay claim. M. Marion obtained from 'the father of his people' the *coadjutorie* of the Abbey of Port-Royal for the high-spirited Jaqueline, then in her eighth year; and that of St. Cyr for the more gentle Agnes, over whom not more than five summers had passed. The young ladies renounced at once the nursery and the world. A single step conducted them from the leading strings to the veil. Before the completion of her first decade, Angelique, on the death of her immediate predecessor, found herself, in plenary right, the abbess and ruler of her monastery; and, in attestation of her spiritual espousals, assumed the title and the name of the Mère Angelique, by which she has since been celebrated in the annals of the church.

To the church, however, must not be imputed this breach of ecclesiastical discipline. In the ardour of his parental affections, the learned advocate-general was hurried into acts for which he would have consigned a criminal of lower degree to the galleys. He obtained the requisite bulls from Rome by forged certificates of his granddaughter's age; and to this treason against the Holy See, Henry himself was at least an accessory after the fact. Hunting in the valley of Port-Royal, the gay monarch trespassed on the precincts of the sacred enclosure. To repel the royal intruder, a child, bearing in her hand the crosier which bespoke her high conventual rank, issued from the gates of the abbey at the head of a solemn procession of nuns, and rebuked her sovereign with all the majesty of an infant Ambrose. Henry laughed and obeyed. Marion's detected fraud would seem to have passed for a good practical joke, and for nothing more. In the result, however, no occurrence ever contributed less to the comedy of life, or formed the commencement of a series of events more grave or touching. It would be difficult or impossible to discover, in the history of the church, the name of any woman who has left so deep an impress of her character on the thoughts and the conduct of the Christian commonwealth.

The family of Arnauld held a conspicuous station among the noblesse of Provence, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In a later age a member of that house enjoyed the singular honour of at once serving Catharine de Medicis as her procureur-general, and of defeating, sword in hand, at the head of his servants, the force sent to assassinate him on the day of St. Bartholomew. Returning to the bosom of the church, which had thus roughly wooed him,



he transmitted his fortune and his office to his son, Antoine Arnauld, the husband of Catharine Marion. They were the happy parents of no less than twenty children. Of these the youngest was the great writer, who has imparted to the name of Arnauld an imperishable lustre. Five of the daughters of the same house assumed the veil in the abbey of Port-Royal. Their mother, Catharine Marion, was admitted in her widowhood into that society. Pomponne, the minister of Louis XIV., Le Maitre, unrivalled among the masters of forensic eloquence in France, and De Sacy, the author of the best version of the Holy Scriptures into the French language, were three of her grandsons. Before her death the venerable matron had seen herself surrounded, in the monastery and the adjoining hermitages, by eighteen of her descendants in the first and second generations; nor until the final dispersion of the sisterhood, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, had the posterity of Antoine and Catharine Arnauld ceased to rule in the house of which the Mère Angelique had, seventy years before, been the renowned reformer.

To those who believe that the psychological distinction of the sexes may be traced to physical causes; and that, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, those distinctions will for ever disappear, the character of Angelique is less perplexing than to the advocates of the opposite theory. Her understanding, her spirit, and her resolves, were all essentially masculine. She was endued with the various faculties by which man either extorts or wins dominion over his fellow-men;—with address, courage, fortitude, self-reliance, and an unfaltering gaze fixed on objects at once too vast to be measured, and too remote to be discerned, but by the all-searching eye of faith. Among the Israelites of old, she would have assumed the office of Judge; or would have given out oracles in the forests of ancient Germany. Born in the reign, and educated near the court of a Bourbon, the lighter and more gentle elements of her nature found exercise even under the paralysing influences of an ascetic life; for Angelique was gay and light of heart, and St. Benedict himself might have forgiven or applauded the playful sallies of his votary. In scaling the heights of devotion, she could call to her own aid, and that of others, all the resources of the most plaintive or impassioned music. To flowers, and the glad face of nature, she gave back their own smiles with a true woman's sympathy. With such literature as might be cultivated within the walls of her convent, she was intimately conversant; and would have eclipsed Madame de Sévigné's epistolary fame, had it been permitted to her to escape from theological into popular topics. Concentrated within a domestic circle, and be-

stowed on a husband or a child, the affections which she poured out on every human being who claimed her pity, would have burned with a flame as pure and as intense as was ever hymned in poetry, or dreamt of in romance. A traveller on the highways of the world, she must have incurred every peril except that of treading an obscure and inglorious path. Immured by superstition in a cloister, she opened the way at once to sublunary fame and to an immortal recompence; and has left an example as dangerous as it may be seductive to feeblér minds who, in a desperate imitation of such a model, should hazard a similar self-devotion.

Angelique, indeed, might be fitted for a nunnery; for such was the strength, and such the sacred harmony, of her spirit, that whilst still a sojourner on earth, she seemed already a denizen of heaven. When a child, she understood as a child; enjoying the sports, the rambles, and the social delights which the habits of Port-Royal had not then forbidden. With advancing years came deeper and more melancholy thoughts. She felt, indeed, (how could she but feel?) the yearnings of a young heart for a world where love and homage awaited her. But those mysteries of our being of which the most frivolous are not altogether unconscious, pressed with unwonted weight on her. A spouse of Christ — a spiritual mother of those who sustained the same awful character — her orisons, her matins, and her vesper chants, accompanied by unearthly music and by forms of solemn significance — the Gothic pile beneath which she sat enthroned — and the altar where, as she was taught, the visible presence of her Redeemer was daily manifested — all spoke to her of a high destiny, a fearful responsibility, and of objects for which all sublunary ties might well be severed, and a sacrifice wisely made of every selfish feeling. Nor need a Protestant fear to acknowledge, that on a heart thus consecrated to the service of her Maker, rested the holy influence, familiar to all who meekly adore the great source of wisdom, and reverently acquiesce in his will. As a science, religion consists in the knowledge of the relations between God and man; as a living principle, in the exercise of the corresponding affections; as a rule of duty, in the performance of the actions which those affections prescribe. The principle may thrive in healthful life and energy, though the science be ill understood, and the rule imperfectly apprehended. For, after all, the great command is Love; and He from whom that command proceeded, is himself Love; and amidst all the absurdities (for such they were) of her monastic life, Angelique was still conscious of the presence of a Father, and found the guidance of a friend.

When, at the age of eleven years, Angelique became the abbess

of Port-Royal, few things were less thought of by the French ladies of the Cistercian Order than the rule of their austere founder. During the wars of the League, religion, by becoming a watchword, had almost ceased to be a reality. Civil war, the apology for every crime, had debased the national character; and the profligacy of manners which the last generation expiated by their sufferings, may be distinctly paid back to the age of which Davila has written the political, and Bassompierre the social history. Society will still exert a powerful influence even over those by whom it has been abandoned. When Gabrielle d'Etrees reigned at the Louvre, beads were told and masses sung in neighbouring cloisters, by vestals who, in heathen Rome, would have been consigned to a living sepulchre. In a monastery, the spiritual thermometer ranges from the boiling to the freezing point, with but few intermediate pauses. From the ecstasies of devotion there is but one step to disgust, and thence to sensuality, for most of those who dare to forego the aids to piety and virtue which divine wisdom has provided in the duties and the affections of domestic life.

While this downward progress was advancing at Port-Royal, it happened that a Capuchin friar sought and obtained permission to preach there. Of the man himself, the chroniclers of the house have left a scandalous report; but they gratefully acknowledge the efficacy of his sermon. Angelique listened, and was converted. Such, at least, is her own statement: and unstirred be all the theological questions connected with it. How deep was the impression on her mind, may be gathered from her own words:—‘Often,’ she exclaims, ‘did I wish to fly a hundred leagues from the spot, and never more to see my father, mother, or kindred, dearly as I love them. My desire was to live apart from every one but God, unknown to any human being, concealed and humble, with no witness but himself, with no desire but to please him.’ Her dignity as abbess she now regarded as a burden. Even her projected reforms had lost their interest. To live where her holy aspirations *would* be thwarted, and where examples of holiness would *not* be found, was to soar to a more arduous, and therefore a more attractive sphere of self-denial. That such fascinations should dazzle a young lady in her seventeenth year, is, it must be confessed, no very memorable prodigy; but to cherish no ineffectual emotions was one of the characteristics of the Mère Angelique: as it is, indeed, of all powerful minds. To abdicate her ecclesiastical rank, and, by breathing a tainted moral atmosphere, to nourish, by the force of contrast, the loftier Christian graces, were purposes ultimately executed, though for a while postponed. She paused only till the sisterhood of Port-Royal should have acquired, from

her example or teaching, that sanctity of manners in which her creed informed her that the perfection of our nature consists. To the elder ladies, the prospect had few charms. But the will of their young abbess prevailed. They laid at her feet their separate possessions, abandoned every secular amusement, and, closing the gates of their monastery against all strangers, retired to that uninterrupted discharge of their spiritual exercises to which their vows had consigned them. Much may be read, in the conventual annals, of the contest with her family to which the Mère Angelique was exposed by the last of these resolutions. On a day, subsequently held in high esteem as the 'Journée du Guichet,' her parents and M. D'Andilly, her eldest brother, were publicly excluded, by her mandate, from the hallowed precincts, despite their reproaches and their prayers, and the filial agonies of her own heart. That great sacrifice accomplished, the rest was easy. Poverty resumed his stern dominion. Linen gave place to the coarsest woollens. Fasting and vigils subdued the lower appetites; and Port-Royal was once more a temple whence the sacrifices of devotion rose with an unextinguished flame to heaven, thence, as it was piously believed, to draw down an unbroken stream of blessings upon earth.

Far different were the strains that arose from the neighbouring abbey of Maubisson, under the rule of Mde. d'Etrees. That splendid mansion, with its dependent baronies and forests, resembled far more the palace and gardens of Armida, than a retreat sacred to penitence and prayer. She was the sister of the too famous Gabrielle, to whose influence with Henry she was indebted for this rich preferment. Indulging without restraint, not merely in the luxuries but in the debaucheries of the neighbouring capital, she had provoked the anger of the king, and the alarm of the General of the Order. A visitation of the house was directed. Madame d'Etrees imprisoned the visitors, and well-nigh starved them. A second body of delegates presented themselves. Penances, at least when compulsory, were not disused at Maubisson. The new commissioners were locked up in a dungeon, regaled with bread and water, and soundly whipped every morning. Supported by a guard, the General himself then hazarded an encounter with the formidable termagant. He returned with a whole skin, but boasting no other advantage. Next appeared at the abbey gates a band of archers. After two days of fruitless expostulation, they broke into the enclosure. Madame now changed her tactics. She took up a defensive position, till then unheard of in the science of strategy. In plain terms, she went to bed. A more embarrassing manœuvre was never executed by Turenne or Condé. The siege was turned into a blockade. Hour after hour elapsed; night



succeeded to day, and day to night; but still the abbess was recumbent—unapparelled,—unapproachable. Driven thus to choose between a ludicrous defeat and a sore scandal, what Frenchman could longer hesitate? Bed, blankets, abbess and all, were raised on the profane shoulders of the archers, lifted into a carriage, and most appropriately turned over to the keeping of the *Filles Penitentes* at Paris.

And now was to be gratified the lofty wish of Angelique to tread in paths where, unsustained by any human sympathy, she might cast herself with an undivided reliance on the Arm which she knew could never fail her. From the solemn repose of Port-Royal, she was called, by the General of the Order, to assume the government of the ladies of Maubisson. Thetis passing from the ocean caves to the Grecian camp, did not make a more abrupt transition. At Maubisson, the compromise between religious duties and earthly pleasures was placed on the most singular footing. Monks and nuns sauntered together through the gardens of the monastery, or angled in the lakes which watered them. Fêtes were celebrated in the arbours with every pledge except that of temperance. Benedictine cowls and draperies were blended in the dance with the military uniform and the stiff brocades of their secular guests; and the evening closed with cards and dice and amateur theatricals, until the curtain fell on scenes than which none could more require that friendly shelter. Toil and care might seem to have fled the place, or rather to have been reserved exclusively for the confessor. Even for him relief was provided. Considerately weighing the extent of the labours which they habitually imposed on him, his fair penitents drew up for their common use certain written forms of self-arraignment, to which he, with equal tenderness, responded by other established forms of conditional absolution.

But the Lady entered, and Comus and his crew fled the hallowed ground which they had thus been permitted to defile. She entered with all the majesty of faith, tempered by a meek compassion for the guilt she abhorred, and strong in that virgin purity of heart which can endure unharmed the contact even of pollution. ‘Our health and our lives may be sacrificed,’ she said to her associates in this work of mercy; ‘but the work is the work of God:’ and in the strength of God she performed it. Seclusion from the world was again established within the refectory and the domain of Maubisson. Novices possessing a ‘genuine vocation’ were admitted. Angelique directed at once the secular and the spiritual affairs of the convent. All the details of a feudal principality, the education of the young, the care of the sick, the soothing of the penitents, the management of the perverse, the

conduct of the sacred offices, alternately engaged her time; and in each she exhibited a gentleness, a gaiety, and a firmness of mind, before which all resistance gave way. The associates of Madame d'Etrees retained their love of good cheer, and Angelique caused their table to be elegantly served. They sang deplorably out of tune, and the young abbess silently endured the discord which racked her ear. To their murmurs she answered in her kindest accents. Their indolence she rebuked only by performing the most menial offices in their service; and she inculcated self-denial by assigning to herself a dormitory which, to say the truth, would have much better suited the house-dog. The record of the strange and even sordid self-humiliations to which she thought it right to bow, can hardly be read without a smile; but, whatever may have been the errors of her creed, a more touching picture has never been drawn of the triumphs of love and of wisdom, than in the record left by Madame Suireau des Anges of this passage of the life of Angelique Arnauld.

But Madame d'Etrees was not yet at the end of her resources. A company of young men, under the guidance of her brother-in-law the Count de Sauzé, were observed one evening to loiter near the house of the *Filles Penitentes*. By the next morning she was, under their escort, at the gates of Maubisson. Burst open by main force, they again admitted the ejected abbess. The servant who opposed her entrance was chastised on the spot. Patients who now occupied as an hospital the once sumptuous chambers of the Abbatial lodge, instantly found themselves in much more humble lodgings. Cooks resumed their long neglected art, and Madame d'Etrees provided a dinner worthy of her former hospitality and her recent privations. But in the presence of Angelique, the virago was abashed. To intimidate or to provoke her rival proved alike impossible: it might be more easy to overpower her. De Sauzé and his confederates made the attempt. They discharged their pistols and flourished their drawn swords over her head, with unmanly menaces. She remained unmoved and silent. The screams which the occasion demanded, were accordingly supplied by the intrusive abbess. Clamour and outrage were alike ineffectual. At length Madame d'Etrees and her respectable confessor, aided by De Sauzé, laid their hands on Angelique, and thrust her from the precincts of the monastery. Thirty of the nuns followed her in solemn procession. Their veils let down, their eyes cast on the earth, and their hands clasped in prayer, they slowly moved to a place of refuge in the neighbouring town of Pontoise.

But alas, for the vanity of human triumphs!—waving banners,

and burnished arms glittered through the advancing column of dust on the road from Paris to Maubisson. Scouts announced the approach of two hundred and fifty well-appointed archers. Madame d'Étrees and her cavaliers escaped by the postern. A desperate leap saved the worthless life of her confessor. Her partisan, the Mère de la Sure, 'a nun by profession, but otherwise resembling a trooper,' mounted through a trap-door to a hiding-place in the ceiling, thence to be shamefully dragged by an archer, whom she still more shamefully abused. Then might be seen through the gloom of night, a train of priests and nuns drawing near with measured steps to the venerable abbey; on either side a double file of cavalry, and in each horseman's hand a torch, illuminating the path of the returning exiles. Angelique resumed her benignant reign; but not in peace. Brigands led by De Sauzé, and encouraged by her rival, haunted the neighbouring forests; and, though protected by the archers, the monastery remained in a state of siege. Shots were fired through the windows, and the life of Angelique was endangered. Strong in the assurance of Divine protection, she demanded and obtained the removal of the guard. Her confidence was justified by the event. Madame d'Étrees was discovered, was restored to her old quarters at the *Filles Penitentes*, and, in due time transferred—not without good cause—to the Chatelet; there to close in squalid misery, in quarrels, and intemperance, a career which might, with almost equal propriety, form the subject of a drama, a homily, or a satire.

For five successive years Angelique laboured to bring back the ladies of Maubisson to the exact observance of their sacred vows. Aided by her sister Agnes, the abbess of St. Cyr, she established a similar reform in a large proportion of the other Cistercian nunneries of France. All obstacles yielded to their love, their prudence, and their self-devotion. A moral plague was stayed, and excesses which even the sensual and the worldly condemned, were banished from the sanctuaries of religion. That in some, the change was but from shameless riot to hypocritical conformity; that in others, intemperance merely gave way to mental lethargy; and that even the most exalted virtues of the cloister hold but a subordinate and an equivocal place in the scale of Christian graces, is indeed but too true: yet assuredly it was in no such critical spirit as this, that the labours of Angelique were judged and accepted by Him, in the lowly imitation of whom she had thus gone about doing good. 'She has done what she could,' was the apology with which He rescued from a like cold censure the love which had expressed itself in a costly and painful sacrifice; nor was the gracious benediction which rewarded the woman of Bethany withheld from the

abbess of Port-Royal. To that tranquil home she bent her steps, there to encounter far heavier trials than any to which the resentment of Madame d'Etrees had exposed her.

Accompanied by a large number of the nuns of Maubisson, Angelique returned to the valley of Chevreuse. They brought with them neither silver nor gold, though rich in treasures of a far higher price in the account of their devout protectress. Poverty, disease, and death, were however in their train. Rising from the marshes below, a humid fog hung continually on the slopes of the adjacent hills, and the now crowded monastery was soon converted into one great hospital. But for a timely transfer of the whole establishment to a hotel purchased for them by the mother of Angelique in the Faubourg St. Jacques at Paris, their remaining history might all have been compressed into a chapter on the influence of *malaria*.

The restoration of the community to health was not, however, the most momentous consequence of the change. It introduced the abbess to the society and the influence of Hauranne de Verger, the abbot of St. Cyran, one of the most memorable names in the ecclesiastical annals of that age. When Richelieu was yet a simple bishop, he distinguished among the crowd of his companions one whose graceful bearing, open countenance, learning, gaiety, and wit, revealed to his penetrating glance the germs of future eminence. But to an eye dazzled by such prospects as were already dawning on the ambitious statesman, those which had arrested the upward gaze of his young associate were altogether inscrutable. With what possible motive De Verger should for whole days bury himself in solitude, and chain down that buoyant spirit to the study of the Greek and Latin fathers, was one of the few problems which ever engaged and baffled the sagacity of M. de Luçon. They parted; the prelate to his craft, the student to his books; the one to extort the reluctant admiration of the world, the other to toil and to suffer in the cause of piety and truth. They met again; the cardinal to persecute, and the abbot to be his victim. Death called them both to their account; leaving to them in the world they had agitated or improved, nothing but historical names, as forcibly contrasted as they had been strangely associated.

Great men (and to few could that title be more justly given than to Richelieu) differ from other men chiefly in the power of self-multiplication; in knowing how to make other men adopt their views and execute their purposes. Thus to subjugate the genius of St. Cyran, the great minister had spared neither caresses nor bribes. The place of first almoner to Henrietta of England, the bishoprics of Clermont and Bayonne, a choice among numerous



abbacies, were successively offered and refused. 'Gentlemen, I introduce to you the most learned man in Europe,' was the courteous phrase by which the Cardinal made known the friend of his youth to the courtiers who thronged his levee. But human applause had lost its charm for the ear of St. Cyran. The retired and studious habits of his early days had not appeared more inexplicable to the worldly-minded statesman than his present indifference. Self-knowledge had made Richelieu uncharitable. Incredulous of virtues of which he detected no type in the dark recesses of his own bosom, he saw in his former companion a treacherous enemy, if not a rival. There were secrets of his early life of which he seems to have expected and feared the disclosure. St. Cyran was at least the silent, and might become the open enemy of the declaration by which the parliament and clergy of Paris had annulled the marriage of Gaston Duke of Orleans, in order to pave the way for his union with the niece of the Cardinal. To his long-cherished scheme of erecting the kingdom of France into a Patriarchate in his own favour, there could arise no more probable or more dangerous opponent. To these imaginary or anticipated wrongs, was added another, which seems to have excited still more implacable resentment. An aspirant after every form of glory, Richelieu had convinced himself, and required others to believe, that his literary and theological were on a level with his political powers. He was the author of a Catechism where might be read the dogma, that contrition alone, uncombined in the heart of the penitent with any emotions of love towards the Deity, was sufficient to justify an absolution at the Confessional. One Seguenot, a priest of the Oratory, maintained and published the opposite opinion. Rumour denied to Seguenot the real parentage of the book which bore his name, and ascribed it to St. Cyran. From speculations on the love of God to feelings of hatred to man, what polemic will not readily pass, whether his cap be red or black? Seguenot's errors were denounced by the Sorbonne, and the poor man himself was sent to the Bastille, there, during the rest of his great opponent's life, to obtain clearer views on the subject of contrition. Impartial injustice required that the real, or imputed, should fare no better than the nominal author; and St. Cyran was conducted to Vincennes, to breathe no more the free air of heaven till Richelieu himself should be laid in the grave.

Never had that gloomy fortress received within its walls a man better fitted to endure with composure the utmost reverses of fortune. To him, as their patriarch or founder, the whole body of the Port-Royalists, with one voice, attribute not merely a pre-eminence above all their other teachers, but such a combination of

intellectual powers and Christian graces, as would entitle him not so much to a place in the calendar, as to a place apart from, and above, the other luminaries in that spiritual galaxy. Make every deduction from their eulogies which a rational scepticism may suggest, and it will yet be impossible to evade the accumulated proofs on which they claim for St. Cyran the reverence of mankind. Towards the close of the first of the four volumes which he has dedicated to the attempt, Claude Lancelot confesses and laments the difficulty of conveying to others by words any definite image of the sublime and simple reality which he daily contemplated with more than filial reverence. He describes a man moving through the whole circle of the virtues which the Gospel inculcates, with a step so firm as to indicate the constant aid of a more than human power, and with a demeanour so lowly as to bespeak an habitual consciousness of that divine presence. He depicts a moral hero, by whom every appetite had been subdued, and every passion tranquillised, though still exquisitely alive to the pains and the enjoyments of life, and responding with almost feminine tenderness to every affectionate and kindly feeling — a master of all erudition, but never so happy as when imparting to little children the elementary truths on which his own heart reposed — grave, nay, solemn in discourse, but with tones so gentle, a wisdom so profound, and words of such strange authority to animate and to soothe the listener, that, in comparison with his, all other colloquial eloquence was wearisome and vapid — rebuking vice far less by stern reproof than by the contrast of his own serene aspect, at once the result and the reflection of the perfect peace in which his mind continually dwelt, — exhibiting a transcript, however rudely and imperfectly, yet faithfully drawn, of the great example to which his eye was ever turned, and where, averting his regard from all inferior models, it was his wont to study, to imitate, and to adore. In short, the St. Cyran of Lancelot's portraiture is one of those rare mortals whose mental health is absolute and unimpaired — whose character consists not so much in the excellence of particular qualities, as in the symmetry, the balance, and the well-adjusted harmonies of all — who concentrate their energies in one mighty object, because they live under the habitual influence of one supreme motive — who are ceaselessly animated by a love embracing every rational being, from Him who is the common parent of the rest, to the meanest and the vilest of those who were originally created in His image and likeness.

Nor was Lancelot a man inapt to discriminate. He was the author of the Port-Royal Grammars, Greek, Latin, and Italian, now fallen into disuse, but so well known to such of us as ploughed

those rugged soils during the first ten years of the present century. His biographical labours are not without a tinge of his style as a grammarian ;—a little tedious perhaps, and not a little prolix and over-methodical, but replete in almost every page with such touches of genuine dignity in the master, and cordial reverence in the disciple — with a sympathy so earnest for the virtues he celebrates, and so simple-hearted a consciousness of his own inferiority—that, in the picture he undesignedly draws of himself, he succeeds more than in any other way in raising a lofty conception of the man by whom he was held in such willing and grateful subjugation. And he had many fellow-subjects. Richelieu himself had felt his daring spirit awed by the union, in the friend of his youth, of a majestic repose and unwearied activity, which compelled the great minister to admit that the heart of man might envelope mysteries beyond his divination. Pascal, Nicole, Arnauld, and many others, eminent in that age for genius and piety, submitted themselves to his guidance in their studies as well as in their lives, with the implicit deference of children awaiting the commands of a revered and affectionate father. He was a most voluminous writer ; but of his published works, one only attained a transient celebrity, and of that book his authorship was more than doubtful. If he did not disown, he never claimed it. Of the innumerable incidents recorded of him during his imprisonment at Vincennes, few are more characteristic than the sale of a considerable part of a scanty collection of books he had brought there, to purchase clothes for two of his fellow-prisoners, the Baron and Baroness de Beau Soleil. ‘I entreat you,’ he says to the lady to whom he gave this commission, ‘that the cloth may be fine and good, and befitting their station in society. I do not know what is becoming ; but, if I remember, some one has told me that gentlemen and ladies of their condition ought not to be seen in company without gold lace for the men, and black lace for the women. If I am right about this, pray purchase the best, and let every thing be done modestly, yet handsomely, that when they see each other, they may, for a few minutes at least, forget that they are captives.’ It is in the moral, rather than in the intellectual qualities of St. Cyran, that his claim to the veneration of posterity must now be rested. He occupies a place in ecclesiastical history as the founder of Jansenism in France.

Of that system of religious belief and practice, the origin is to be traced to the joint labours of St. Cyran and Cornelius Jansen, during the six years which they passed in social study at Bayonne. Returning to his native country, Jansen became first a Professor of Divinity at Louvain, and afterwards Bishop of Ypres. There

he surrendered himself to a life of unremitting labour. Ten times he read over every word of the works of Augustine; thirty times he studied all those passages of them which relate to the Pelagian controversy. All the fathers of the church were elaborately collated for passages illustrative of the opinions of the Bishop of Hippo. At length, after an uninterrupted study of twenty years, was finished the celebrated *Augustinus Cornelii Jansenii*. With St. Austin as his text and guide, the good Bishop proceeded to establish, on the authority of that illustrious father, those doctrines which, in our times and country, have been usually distinguished by the terms Calvinistic or Evangelical. Heirs of guilt and corruption, he considered the human race, and each successive member of it, as lying in a state of condemnation, and as advancing towards a state of punishment; until an internal impulse from on high awakens one and another to a sense of this awful truth, and infuses into them a will to fly from impending vengeance. But this impulse is imparted only to the few; and on them it is bestowed in pursuance of a decree existing in the Divine intelligence before the creation of our species. Of the motives of their preference not even a conjecture can be formed. So far as human knowledge extends, it is referable simply to the Divine volition; and is not dependent on any inherent moral difference between the objects of it, and those from whom such mercy is withheld. This impulse is not, however, irresistible. Within the limits of his powers, original or imparted, man is a free agent;—free to admit and free to reject the proffered aid. If rejected, it enhances his responsibility—if admitted, it leads him by continual accessions of the same supernatural assistance to an acquiescence in those opinions, to the exercise of those affections, and to the practice of those virtues which collectively form the substance of the Christian system.

Such is the general result of the labours of Jansen. On the day which witnessed the completion of them, he was removed by the plague to a state of being where he probably learned at once to rejoice in the fidelity, and to smile at the simplicity of those sublunary toils. Within an hour of his death he made a will, submitting his work to the judgment of the Church of Rome, in the communion of which he had lived, and was about to die. He addressed to Pope Urban VIII. a letter, laying the fruits of his studies at the feet of his holiness, ‘approving, condemning, advancing, or retracting, as should be prescribed by the thunder of the apostolic see.’ Both the will and the letter were suppressed by his executors. Two years from the death of its author had not elapsed, before the *Augustinus* appeared in print. It was the



signal of a contest which for nearly seventy years agitated the Sorbonne and Versailles, fired the enthusiasm of the ladies and the divines of France, and gave to her historians and her wits a theme, used with fatal success, to swell the tide of hatred and of ridicule, which has for ever swept away the temporal greatness, and which for a while silenced the spiritual ministrations of the Gallican Church.

Having aided largely in the composition of this memorable treatise, St. Cyran exerted himself with still greater effect in building up a society for the maintenance and promulgation of the principles it established. Angelique Arnauld and the sisterhood of Port-Royal were now settled at Paris, but they were still the proprietors of the deserted monastery; and there were gradually assembled a college of learned men, bound by no monastic vows, and living according to no positive rule, Benedictine or Franciscan. They were chiefly disciples of St. Cyran, and under his guidance had retired from the world to consecrate their lives to penitence, to their own spiritual improvement, and to the instruction of mankind.

Of this number was Antoine Le Maitre. At the age of twenty-seven, he had been advanced to the rank of Councillor of State, and enjoyed at the bar an unrivalled reputation for learning and for eloquence. When he was to speak, even the churches were abandoned. Quitting their pulpits, the preachers assisted to throng the hall of the palace of justice; and some of the most celebrated among them actually obtained from their superiors a permanent dispensation from their ecclesiastical duties at such seasons, that they might improve in the art of public speaking by listening to the great advocate. When he spoke, the delight of the audience broke out into bursts of applause, which the Judges were unable or unwilling to repress. 'I would rather be the object of those plaudits than enjoy all the glory of my Lord the Cardinal,' was the somewhat hazardous exclamation of one of his friends, as he joined, heart and hand, in the universal tumult.

Far different was the estimate which his devout mother had formed of the prospects of her son. She was one of the sisters of Angelique Arnauld; and, amidst the cares of conjugal life, cherished a piety at least as pure and as ardent as ever burned in the bosom of a Carthusian. In the wealth and glory which rewarded his forensic eminence she could see only allurements to which (so she judged) his peace on earth, and his meetness for a holier state of being beyond the grave, must be sacrificed. She mourned over his fame, and prayed that her child might be abased, that so in due season he might be exalted. It happened that his aunt, Ma-

dame D'Andilly, in the last awful scene of life, was attended by her kindred, and amongst the rest by Le Maitre. Her fading eye was fixed on the crucifix borne in the hand of St. Cyran, as she listened to his voice, now subdued to its gentlest accents, and breathing hope, and peace, and consolation. It was as though some good angel had overpassed the confines of the earthly and the heavenly worlds, to give utterance, in human language, to emotions sacred as his own high abode, and to thoughts as lofty as his own celestial nature. The great orator listened, and wondered, and wept. An eloquence such as even his fervent imagination had never before conceived, enthralled and subdued his inmost soul. It was but a soft whisper in the chamber of death; but in those gentle tones, and to that weeping company, were spoken words, compared with which his own eloquence appeared to him trivial, harsh, and dissonant as the howlings of the forest. And when his dying relative's last sigh was heard, accompanied by the solemn benediction, 'Depart, O Christian soul! from this world, in the name of the Almighty God who created you,' Le Maitre felt that the bonds which attached him to that world were for ever broken. He yielded himself to the spiritual guidance of St. Cyran; resigned his office and his calling; and plunged into a retreat, where in solitude, silence, and continued penances, he passed the remaining twenty-one years of his life. By the advice of his confessor, the execution of this design was postponed till the close of the annual session of the courts. In the interval he resumed his ordinary employments; but the spirit which till then had animated his efforts was gone. He became languid and unimpressive; and one of the judges was heard to mutter, that, after all, the real power of Le Maitre was that of persuading to sleep. This was too much even for a penitent. Fixing his eye on the critic, he once more summoned his dormant strength, and pouring forth all the energies of his soul in one last and most triumphant speech, he for ever quitted the scene of his forensic glories.

At Port-Royal he appropriately charged himself with the care of the proprietary interests of the house. A village judge in the neighbourhood was once attended by the illustrious advocate, on a question of the purchase of some bullocks. Astounded by his eloquence (so runs the story), the judge fell on his knees before the pleader, professing his unworthiness to preside in his presence, and imploring that they might exchange places. A more likely tale records that the booksellers had got up, during Le Maitre's retreat, an edition of his speeches full of interpolations and errors. At 'the request of friends,' though not with the consent of his confessors, the orator undertook a corrected edition. His spiritual

guides interfered. They prescribed, as a new species of penance, that he should silently acquiesce in this inroad on his fame as a speaker. The penitent submitted, but not so the booksellers. They (worldly men!) talked loudly of violated promises, and of sheets rendered useless. He listened to discourses on the duty of mortifying these last movements of vain glory. Under the excitement of the dispute, his health, already enfeebled by his mode of life, gave way. A fever decided the question against the publishers; and Le Maitre was doomed at length to die the victim of the brilliant career he had so long and resolutely abandoned.

His brother, Mons. de Sericourt, was another of the converts of St. Cyran. De Sericourt had served with distinction under Condé. He was taken prisoner at the siege of Philipsburg, and effected his escape by leaping from the walls of the fortress at the imminent hazard of his life. Under the deep impression, which this incident left on his mind, of the protecting care of Providence, he returned to Paris, where his first object was to visit his brother, the report of whose retreat from the bar had filled him with astonishment. He found him (the words are Fontaine's) in a kind of tomb, where he was buried alive; his manner bespeaking all the gloom of penitence. De Sericourt was shocked, and in vain endeavoured to recognise Le Maitre in the person who stood before him. Immediately changing his demeanour, Le Maitre embraced his brother with looks full of gaiety and spirit, exclaiming, 'Behold the Le Maitre of former days! He is dead to the world, and now desires only to die to himself. I have spoken enough to men. Henceforth I wish to converse only with God. I have exerted myself in vain to plead the cause of others. Now I am to plead my own. Do you intend to pay me the same compliment which I receive from the world at large, who believe and publish that I have gone mad?' Nothing could be more remote from the judgment of the soldier. Instead of regarding his brother as mad, he aspired to share his solitude, and succeeded. Under the direction of St. Cyran, he joined in the silence and austerities of the advocate. During the war of the princes he once more took up arms for the defence of Port-Royal; but his monastic life was soon brought to a close. Philipsburg had in reality been attended with less danger. At the age of thirty-nine, he died, a premature victim to fastings, vigils, confinement, and probably to ennui. Recruits for Port-Royal were but seldom drawn from the armies of the Most Christian King, and could hardly have been draughted from a less promising quarter.

In this memorable brotherhood there was yet a third, Louis Isaac Le Maitre de Saci. At the early age of fourteen he was

placed by his aunt, the Mère Angelique, under the guidance of St. Cyran. From that prophetic eye the future eminence of his pupil was not hidden. ‘God will restore him to you, for his death would probably be the greatest loss which the church could sustain’—was the prediction with which St. Cyran at once disclosed his own hopes and allayed the fears of De Saci’s mother, as he watched over the sick-bed of her child. To ensure the fulfilment of those hopes, the mind of the boy was sedulously trained. Absolute, unhesitating submission to human authority, as representing the divine, was the cardinal principle of his education. Though himself one of the most conspicuous teachers of his age as a guide to others, he, on no single question, presumed to guide himself. If no other director could have been had, he would have placed himself under the direction of his valet, was the praise with which his friends expressed their admiration of his illustrious docility. By the advice or commands of St. Cyran, he accordingly, like his brothers, became one of the recluses of Port-Royal; and, like them, transferred to the support of the monastery all his worldly wealth. With them also he surrendered himself up to penitence, to solitude, and to silence; and in their company supplied his emaciated frame with food which rather mocked than satisfied its wants. Le Maitre thus describes one of the *petits soupers* of Port-Royal:—‘It is, you know, but a slight repast which they serve up for us in the evening; but it engages my brother De Saci as completely as the most sumptuous meal. For my own part, such is the warmth of my temperament, the end of my good cheer follows so hard on its beginning, that I can hardly tell which is which. When all is over with me, and I have nothing left to do but to wash my hands, I see my brother De Saci, as composed and as serious as ever, take up his quarter of an apple, peel it deliberately, cut it up with precision, and swallow it at leisure. Before he begins, I have more than half done. When his little all is over, he rises from table as light as when he sat down, leaving untouched the greater part of what was set before him, and walks off as seriously as a man who had been doing great things, and who never fasted except on fast-days.’

Poor Le Maitre! the gay spirit which had animated the palace of justice had its transient flashes even in his ‘living tomb;’ though the smile was in this case lighted up at an absurdity which had well nigh conducted his brother to that tomb where all life is extinct. Under these solemn parodies on what usually goes on at the dinner-table, De Saci pined away; and was rescued, not without extreme hazard, from the effects of his suicidal abstemiousness. He returned from the gates of death with a spirit unsubdued and undaunted; for it was animated by hopes, and sustained by convic-



tions which gave to that last enemy the aspect and the welcome of a friend. Admitted, in reluctant obedience to his confessor, to ordination as a priest, he assumed the office of director to the recluses of either sex at Port-Royal. Nature struggled in the bosom of Le Maitre against laying bare all the secrets of his soul to the inspection of his younger brother. But authority prevailed. Their mother led the way, by placing herself under the direction of her son. Blaise Pascal himself meekly took the law of his conscience from the same revered lips. Days of persecution followed, and De Saci was driven from his retreat, and confined for more than two years in the Bastille. There was fulfilled the prediction of St. Cyran. Fontaine, the bosom friend of De Saci, was the associate of his prison hours. They were hours of suffering and of pain; but happier by far than the brightest and the most joyous passed by the revellers in the gay city beneath them.

In those hours, De Saci executed, and his friend transcribed, that translation of the Holy Scriptures which to this moment is regarded in France as the most perfect version in their own or in any other modern tongue. While yet under the charge of St. Cyran, the study of the divine oracles was the ceaseless task of De Saci. In mature life, it had been his continual delight; in the absence of every other solace, it possessed his mind with all the energy of a master passion. Of the ten thousand chords which there blend together in sacred harmony, there was not one which did not awaken a responsive note in the heart of the aged prisoner. In a critical knowledge of the sacred text, he may have had many superiors, but none in that exquisite sensibility to the grandeur, the pathos, the superhuman wisdom, and the awful purity of the divine original, without which none can truly apprehend, or accurately render into another idiom, the sense of the inspired writers. Even the habitual prostration of his judgment to a human authority, believed to be divine, aided him as a translator: it forbade, indeed, the correction of errors, but it imparted freedom and confidence to the expression of all that he acknowledged as truth. Protestants may with justice except to many a passage of De Saci's translation; but they will, we fear, search their own libraries in vain for any, where the author's unhesitating assurance of the real sense of controverted words permits his style to flow with a similar absence of constraint, and an equal warmth and glow of diction.

Fontaine, the humble companion of his biblical labours, had also been one of the penitents of De Saci. He was a man of learning, and his '*Mémoires sur MM. de Port-Royal*,' bespeak a nature gentle, affectionate, and devout. But to saturate his memory with the discourse of minds more exalted than his own, and

to minister to them in collating or transcribing the books on which they were employed, limited his humble desires. He was successively the amanuensis of De Saci, and the secretary of the 'great' Arnauld. A name so truly great, excepting that of Pascal, does not appear among the disciples of St. Cyran, or the inmates of Port-Royal.

Antoine Arnauld was the youngest child of the parents of the Mère Angelique: he was consequently the uncle of Le Maitre, De Sericourt, and De Saci. From his earliest years the reputation of his genius and learning had rendered him the object of universal notice and expectation. Richelieu himself is recorded to have stolen silently into his chamber, to enjoy the unpremeditated conversation of the young student. The Cardinal had no apparent reason to dread that in this case his advances would be repulsed; for Arnauld possessed several rich benefices, dressed in fashion, and even kept a carriage. But repulsed they were, and by the influence of the man to whom similar allurements had been presented in vain. In his dungeon at Vincennes, St. Cyran received a visit from the young abbé. That almost magical influence was again exerted with irresistible power. Arnauld renounced his preferments, assumed the garb of penitence, and became the companion of his nephews, Le Maitre and Sericourt, in their austere retirement. This abandonment of the world was not, however, so absolute, but that he still sought the rank of a *socius* or fellow of the Sorbonne. By the authority of Richelieu, his claims were rejected. But not even the Cardinal could obstruct the advancement of so eminent a scholar and divine to the dignity of a doctor in divinity. 'To defend the truth, if necessary, to the death,' was in those days one of the vows of such a graduate—vows, it is to be feared, light as air with most men, but, in this instance, engraven as with a pen of iron on the soul of the new professor of theology.

A year had scarcely elapsed since he had received from the lips of his dying mother an adjuration to be faithful in the defence of truth at the expense, were it possible, of a thousand lives. Touched with the coincidence of his academical oath and of this maternal precept, he thenceforward existed but to combat for what he at least esteemed the truth; and endured poverty, exile, and reproach, as he would have cheerfully submitted to death, in that sacred warfare. In controversy he found his vocation, his triumph, and perhaps his delight. The author of more than a hundred volumes, he was engaged in almost as many contests. His great work, *La fréquente Communion*, is essentially controversial. He warred with the Jesuits as a body; and with several of their most eminent writers, as Sirmond, Nouet, and De Bonis, he carried on

separate debates. Apologies for St. Cyran, Jansenius, and for the ladies of Port-Royal flowed copiously from his ever ready pen. He assailed the metaphysical meditations of Des Cartes, and Malebranche's theory of miracles. He contended even with his friend and associate, Nicole, on an attempt to apply certain geometrical principles to the solution of some problems in divinity. Claude, Maimbourg, and Annat, were among his adversaries. The mere list of his works occupies twenty-six closely-printed octavo pages. A rapid analysis of them fills a large volume. If that compilation may be trusted (he would be a bold man who should undertake to verify it), the vast collection of books which bear the name of Antoine Arnauld scarcely contain a tract, except those on mathematics, in which he is not engaged in theological or scientific strife with some antagonist.

In the catalogue, of course, appears the celebrated treatise *De la Perpétuité de la Foi sur l'Eucharistie*, a work rewarded with higher applause than any other of his avowed writings. Twenty-seven Bishops and twenty Doctors prefaced it with eulogies on the learning, piety, talents, and orthodoxy of the illustrious author. He dedicated it to Clement IX., and was repaid with the most glowing compliments. Perhaps a still more gratifying tribute to his success was the conversion to the Roman Catholic faith of Turenne, of which this book was the occasion; and yet nothing is more certain than that the real author was not Arnauld, but Nicole. In the title page of a book, designed to refute the formidable Claude, the two friends judged the name of a Doctor of the church would avail more than that of a simple *tonsuré*—on the side of Arnauld a literary and pious fraud, which it is impossible to excuse; and, on the side of Nicole, an example of zeal for a man's cause triumphing over his love of fame, to which it would not be easy to find a parallel. Such, however, was the height of Arnauld's reputation, and such the affluence of his mind, that it is scarcely reasonable to attribute this disingenuous proceeding to selfish motives. Few men have been more enamoured of the employments, or less covetous of the rewards of a literary life. For nearly threescore years he lived pen in hand, except when engaged in devotion, or in celebrating the offices of the church of Port-Royal on occasions of peculiar dignity. His was one of those rare natures to which intellectual exertion brings relief rather than lassitude; thus giving to feebler understandings the assurance that the living spirit which is in man, if disunited from the burdens of mortality, would be capable of efforts commensurate with an immortal existence.

His book, *De la fréquente Communion*, was the commencement

of the seventy years' religious war which ended in the destruction of Port-Royal. To restore the severe maxims of Christian antiquity respecting the spiritual qualification of communicants, and thus to raise a standard of church membership, incomparably more exalted than that which prevailed in his own generation, was the avowed object of Arnauld. His scarcely concealed purpose was to chastise the lax morality to which the Jesuits had lent their sanction; and to repel their attacks on the more rigid system of St. Cyran. Revised in his prison by that father of the faithful, and sheltered by the commendation of divines of every rank and order, the book—forbearing in style, lofty in sentiment, replete with various learning, and breathing an eloquence at once animated by unhesitating faith, and chastened by the most profound humility—broke like a peal of thunder over the heads of his startled antagonists. Such was the fury of their resentment, that the Marshal de Vihé sagaciously observed, 'There must be some secret in all this. The Jesuits are never so excited when nothing but the glory of God is at stake.' Though at first struck down by the censures of a conclave of Bishops, with Mazarin at their head, Nouet, the great advocate of the society, returned again and again to the assault. Pulpits fulminated, presses groaned. On the one side, the Sorbonne invoked the aid of the civil power, then in feeble hands; on the other, the Jesuits appealed to the Papal See, then rising in new vigour from the disasters of the preceding century. Arnauld was cited by the Pope, and required by the Cardinal Minister of France to appear in his own defence at Rome. Against this infringement of the Gallican liberties, the University, the Sorbonne, and the Parliament of Paris remonstrated; but Mazarin was inflexible.

The Holy See took cognisance of the cause, though the person of the accused was beyond their reach. In his absence, that infallible tribunal decided not to let the world know whether, of the thirty erroneous opinions imputed to Arnauld as heresies, twenty and nine were heretical or not. Arnauld himself, however, was unable to stand his ground. For twenty-five years together, he was compelled to live in a voluntary concealment, which his enemies had not the power nor perhaps the wish, to violate. His retirement was passed in the monastery of Port-Royal, or in one of the adjacent hermitages.

That ancient seat of their Order had now been long deserted by his sister Angelique and her associates. Their residence at Paris had not been unfruitful of events. They had exchanged the jurisdiction of the General of their Order for that of the Archbishop of Paris. On the voluntary resignation of Angelique, and by her desire, the abbatial dignity had been made elective in their house.



An ineffectual scheme of devoting themselves to the perpetual adoration of the Holy Eucharist, had deeply exercised their thoughts. Occasional miracles had awakened or rewarded their piety. An inspired litany (so it was believed) had fallen insensibly from the pen of sister Agnes, which eight Doctors censured, St. Cyran vindicated, and the Pope suppressed. From his prison at Vincennes, their great apologist directed their consciences, and guided them to the office of educating children of their own sex—a wise and happy project, which brought back into the sphere of ordinary duties, minds soaring with indefinite aims into the regions of mysticism, and wasting, in efforts for an ideal perfection, talents eminently fitted to bless and to improve mankind.

To restore the sisterhood to the quiet valley where their predecessors had worshipped, was the next care of St. Cyran. True, it threatened their lives; but ‘is it not,’ he asked, ‘as well to serve God in an hospital as in a church, if such be his pleasure?’ ‘Are any prayers more acceptable than those of the afflicted?’ Angélique’s heart had a ready answer to such questions from such an inquirer. In that sequestered church where angels, and a still more awful presence, had once dwelt, they could not but still abide, (such was his assurance,) and she returned to seek them there. She came attended by a large proportion of the ladies of Port-Royal, hailed by the poor and aged, whom in former times she had cherished, and welcomed by her kinsmen and by the companions of their religious solitude. It was their first and only meeting. *Les Granges* (a farm-house on the hill-side) became the residence of the recluses, the gates of the monastery closing on the nuns.

Bound by no monastic vows, the men addressed themselves to such employments as each was supposed best qualified to fill. Schools for the instruction of youth in every branch of literature and science were kept by Lancelot, Nicole, Fontaine, and De Saci. Some laboured at translations of the fathers, and other works of piety. Arnauld plied his ceaseless toils in logic, geometry, metaphysics, and theological debate. Physicians of high celebrity exercised their art in all the neighbouring villages. *Le Maître* and other eminent lawyers addressed themselves to the work of arbitrating in all the dissensions of the vicinage. There were to be seen gentlemen working assiduously as vine-dressers; officers making shoes; noblemen sawing timber and repairing windows; a society held together by no vows, governed by no corporate laws, subject to no common superior, pursuing no joint designs, yet all living in unbroken harmony; all following their respective callings—silent, grave, abstracted, self-afflicted by fastings, watchings, and humiliations—a body of penitents on their painful progress through

a world which they had resolved at once to serve and to avoid. From year to year, till death or persecution removed them from the valley of Port-Royal, the members of this singular association adhered pertinaciously to their design ; nor among their annals will be found more, we think, than a single name on which rests the imputation of infidelity or fickleness of purpose.

To the nuns, indeed, no such change was possible. Like the inhabitants of Les Granges, they employed themselves in educating the children of the rich and the poor, in almsgiving, and in other works of mercy. Their renunciation of secular cares was combined (no common alliance) with an entire superiority to all secular interests. Angelique, now the elected abbess, and in that character the ruler of the temporalities of the convent, exhibited a princely spirit of munificence — nourished and sustained by the most severe and self-denying economy. She and her sisterhood reserved for themselves little more than a place in their own list of paupers. So firm was her reliance on the Divine bounty, and so abstemious her use of it, that she hazarded a long course of heroic improvidence, justified by the event and ennobled by the motive ; but at once fitted and designed rather to excite the enthusiasm of ordinary mortals, than to afford a model for their imitation. Buildings were erected both at Port-Royal de Paris, and Port-Royal des Champs ; in the serene majesty of which the worshipper might discern an appropriate vestibule to the temple made without hands, towards which his adoration was directed. Wealth was never permitted to introduce, nor poverty to exclude, any candidate for admission as a novice or a pupil. On one occasion twenty thousand francs were given as a relief to a distressed community ; on another, four times that sum were restored to a benefactress, whose heart repented a bounty which she had no longer the right to reclaim. Their regular expenditure exceeded by more than sevenfold their certain income ; nor were they ever disappointed in their assurance, that the annual deficiency of more than forty thousand francs would be supplied by the benevolence of their fellow Christians.

What was the constraining force of charity, Angelique had learned from the study of her own heart, and she relied with a well-founded confidence in the same generous impulse in the hearts of others. The grace, the gaiety, and tenderness of her nature, which might have embellished courts and palaces, were drawn into continual exercise to mitigate the anguish of disease, to soothe the wretched, and to instruct the young. Her hands ministered, by day and by night, to the relief of those whose maladies were the most loathsome or contagious, and her voice, in its most kindly tones, allayed their terrors. With playful ingenuity she would teach her associates

how to employ the vestments, the furniture, and, when other resources failed, even the sacred plate, of the monastery, in providing clothes for the naked, though it left themselves in want, and in feeding the hungry, though it deprived themselves of all present resources. While thus distributing bounties, not merely to the necessities of the indigent, but to the relief of persons of her own rank in life, there was in the bosom of Angelique a feeling which revolted, not against dependence on alms, for her vows of poverty required it, but against soliciting aid even from her nearest kindred; — a feeling condemned as human, perhaps, in her stern self-judgment, but assuredly one of those emotions which the best of our race are the last to relinquish. And if it be true, as true it surely is, that to the culture and exercise of the benevolent affections as an ultimate end, all other ends of human life — knowledge, practical skill, meditative power, self-control, and the rest — are but subservient means, who shall deny to such a course of life as that of the nuns of Port-Royal, the praise of wisdom, however ill he may judge of the wisdom which established and maintained conventual institutions? Some affections, indeed, they could not cultivate. Two of the deepest and the richest mines of their nature, maternal and conjugal love, lay unwrought and unexplored. Yet they lived, as wisdom we are told ought to live, with children round their knees; training them for every office in life, if not with a mother's yearnings, with perhaps something more than a mother's prudence.

Over this singular theocracy, male and female, presided St. Cyran, exercising from his dungeon a supreme authority; and under him ruled Antoine Singlin, the general confessor both of the recluses and the nuns. In the conduct of souls, (such is the appropriate style,) Singlin was supposed to excel all the professors of that most critical science. Pascal, De Saci, and Arnauld sat at his feet with childlike docility. Ministers of state, advocates, and bishops, crowded reverently round his pulpit; yet by the confession, or rather the boast, of his disciples, he was distinguished neither by learning, talents, nor eloquence. The mystery of his absolute dominion over intellects so incomparably superior to his own, is partly, at least, dispelled by what remains of his writings. They indicate a mind at once discriminating and devout, conversant alike with human nature and with the Divine, exerting all its powers to penetrate the labyrinth of man's heart, and sustaining these powers by habitual communion with the source of wisdom.

Guided by such pastors, the Port-Royalists were following out a progress more tranquil than that of John Bunyan's Pilgrim, when the wars of the Fronde rudely scattered the shepherd and the flock. Most of the nuns fled for refuge to Paris, but the recluses (they

were Frenchmen still) appeared three hundred strong, in defence of their sequestered valley. Above their hair-shirts glittered coats of mail. As the last notes of the anthem died away, the trumpet summoned the worshippers to military exercises. Spears and helmets flashed through the woods — plumes waved over many a furrowed brow — intrenchments, the course of which may still be traced, were thrown up; and the evening-gun, the watch-word, and the heavy tread of cavalry, broke a silence till then undisturbed, except by the monastic choir, or the half-uttered prayer of some lonely penitent. De Sericourt felt once again his pulse beat high as he drew out the martial column, and raised the long-forgotten words of peremptory command. But ere long a voice more subdued though not less peremptory, was heard to silence his. De Saci's heart mourned over this reliance on an arm of flesh. Watching the first pause in the new enthusiasm of his associates, he implored them to lay aside their weapons; and in long-suffering to submit themselves and their cause to the Supreme Disposer of events. At an instant the whole aspect of Port-Royal was changed. Students returned to their books, penitents to their cells, and handicraftsmen to their ordinary labours. It was a change as sudden and as complete as when, at the bidding of the Genius, the crowded bridge and the rushing river disappeared from the eyes of Mirza, leaving before him nothing but the long hollow Valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing on the sides of it.

To one inmate of Port-Royal the terrors of an impending war had brought no disquietude. Angelique remained there, the guardian angel of the place. Hundreds of ruined peasants were daily fed by her bounty. 'Perhaps I shall not be able' (the quotation is from one of her letters written at the time) 'to send you a letter to-morrow, for all our horses and asses are dead with hunger. Oh! how little do princes know the detailed horrors of war. All the provender of the beasts we have been obliged to divide between ourselves and the starving poor. We have concealed as many of the peasants and of their cattle as we could, in our monastery, to save them from being murdered and losing all their substance. Our dormitory and the chapter-house are full of horses; we are almost stifled by being pent up with these beasts, but we could not resist the piercing lamentations of the starving and the heart-broken poor. In the cellar we have concealed forty cows. Our court-yards and out-houses are stuffed full of fowls, turkeys, ducks, geese, and asses. The church is piled up to the ceiling with corn, oats, beans, and peas, and with caldrons, kettles, and other things belonging to the cottagers. Our laundry is filled by the aged, the blind, the maimed, the halt, and infants. The



infirmaries are full of sick and wounded. We have torn up all our rags and linen clothing to dress their sores; we have no more, and are now at our wits' end. We dare not go into the fields for any more, as they are full of marauding parties. We hear that the abbey of St. Cyran has been burned and pillaged. Our own is threatened with an attack every day. The cold weather alone preserves us from pestilence. We are so closely crowded, that deaths happen continually. God, however, is with us, and we are at peace.'

That inward peace which Angelique was thus enabled to maintain during the horrors of civil war, was soon to be exposed to a more arduous trial. To the baffled antagonists of Arnauld, Port-Royal was an abomination. There dwelt in safety their intended victim, plying his dreaded pen, surrounded by his kindred, his scholars, and his allies; and all engaged in the same contest with the casuistry, the theology, and the morals of the society of Jesus. Against these devoted enemies one Brisacier, a Jesuit, led the assault. His articles of impeachment bore that they despised the Eucharist, that they had neither holy water nor images in their churches, and that they prayed neither to the Virgin nor the saints. Vain was the clearest refutation of calumnies so shocking to Catholic ears, and vain the archiepiscopal thunders which rebuked the slanderer. Father Megnier, of the same holy company, denounced to the astonished world a secret conspiracy against the religion of Christ, the leaders of which were the Abbot of St. Cyran and Antoine Arnauld — the Voltaire and the Diderot of their age! But human credulity has its limits, and Megnier had overstepped them. For a moment the assailants paused; but at last, the womb of time, fertile in prodigies, gave birth to the far-famed 'five propositions' of Father Coruet — a 'palpable obscure,' lying in the dim regions of psychological divinity, and doomed for successive generations to perplex, to exasperate, and to overwhelm with persecution, or with ridicule, no inconsiderable part of the Christian world.

That these five dogmas on the mystery of the Divine grace, were to be found within the *Augustinus* of Jansenius, was *not* the original charge. They were at first denounced by Coruet as opinions which had been derived from the work of the Bishop of Ypres, by Arnauld and other Doctors of the Gallican Church, and by them inculcated on their own disciples. Innocent X. condemned the propositions as heretical; and to the authority of the Holy See Arnauld and his friends implicitly bowed. In a woodcut prefixed to this papal constitution by the triumphant Jesuits, Jansenius appeared in his episcopal dress, but accoutred with the aspect, the

wings, and the other well-known appendages of the evil spirit, around whom were playing the lightnings of the Vatican.

The man and the heresy thus happily disposed of, a single question remained — Were the peccant propositions really to be found in the *Augustinus* or not? Arnauld declared that he had studied the book from end to end, and could not find them there. That there they were nevertheless to be found, the Jesuits as strongly asserted. To have quoted by chapter and page the offensive passages, would have spoiled the most promising quarrel which had arisen in the Church since the close of the Tridentine Council. Still-born must then have perished the ever-memorable distinction of the *droit* and the *fait* — the *droit* being the justice of the papal censure of the propositions, which all Catholics admitted — the *fait* being the existence, in the *Augustinus*, of the propositions so censured, which all Jansenists denied.

The vulgar mode of trial by quotation being discarded, nothing remained but trial by authority. Annat, the King's Confessor, a Jesuit in religion, and Mazarin, the King's Minister, a Jesuit in politics, each, from different motives, found his account in humiliating the Port-Royalists. A conclave of Parisian Doctors, selected by them, decreed that the five propositions were in the book, and should be in the book. A papal bull affirmed their sentence, and then a second conclave required all the ecclesiastics, and all the religious communities of France, to subscribe their assent to the order which had thus affiliated these foundling opinions on poor Jansenius. That such a defender of the faith as Antoine Arnauld, would receive such a mandate in silence, the authors of it neither expected nor desired. In words exactly transcribed, though not avowedly quoted, from Chrysostom and Augustine, he drew up his own creed on the questions of grace and free-will; and in good round terms acquitted the Bishop of Ypres of having written more or less. A third conclave censured the apologist, unconscious apparently that their fulminations would reach the holy fathers of Constantinople and Hippo. They at least reached the object at which they in reality aimed. 'Could the most Christian King,' they exclaimed, 'permit that penitent recluses and young children should any longer assemble for instruction under the influence of a man who had been convicted of heresy on the subject of efficacious grace, and who was either unable or unwilling to find in the *Augustinus* what the Pope himself had said might be found there?' Anne of Austria listened, Mazarin whispered, and she obeyed. Armed with her authority, her lieutenants appeared at Port-Royal with orders to restore Les Granges and the forests around it to their ancient solitude; and then had for ever fallen

the glories of that sacred valley, but for an incident so strange and opportune as to force back the memory to the precipitate descent from Mount Ida of the Homeric Deities, to rescue, in the agony of his fate, some panting hero on the field of Troy.

Mademoiselle Perrier was the niece of Blaise Pascal. She was a child in her eleventh year, and a scholar residing in the monastery of Port-Royal. For three years and a half she had been afflicted with a *fistula lacrymalis*. The adjacent bones had become carious, and the most loathsome ulcers disfigured her countenance. All remedies had been tried in vain; the medical faculty had exhausted their resources. One desperate experiment remained—it was that of the actual cautery. For this the day was appointed, and her father had set out on a journey to be present at the operation. Now it came to pass that M. de la Potherie, who was at once a Parisian ecclesiastic, a great-uncle of Angelique and of Arnauld, and an assiduous collector of relics, had possessed himself of one of the thorns composing the crown of which we read in the Evangelists. Great had been the curiosity of the various convents to see it, and the ladies of Port-Royal had earnestly solicited that privilege. Accordingly, on the 24th of March, in the year 1656, the day of the week being Friday, and the week the third in Lent, a solemn procession of nuns, novices, and scholars, moved along the choir of the monastic church, chanting appropriate hymns, and each one, in her turn, kissing the holy relic. When the turn of Mademoiselle Perrier arrived, she, by the advice of the schoolmistress, touched her diseased eye with the thorn, not doubting that it would effect a cure. She regained her room, and the malady was gone! The cure was instantaneous and complete. So strict, however, was the silence of the abbey, especially in Lent, that, except to the companion who shared her chamber, Mademoiselle Perrier did not at first divulge the miracle. On the following day the surgeon appeared with his instruments. The afflicted father was present; exhortations to patience were delivered; every preparation was complete, when the astonished operator for the first time perceived that every symptom of the disease had disappeared. All Paris rang with the story. It reached the ear of the queen-mother. By her command, M. Felix, the principal surgeon to the king, investigated and confirmed the narrative. The royal conscience was touched. Who but must be moved with such an attestation from on high, of the innocence of a monastery divinely selected as the theatre of so great a miracle? Anne of Austria recalled her lieutenant. Again the recluses returned to their hermitages; the busy hum of school-

boys was heard once more at Port-Royal; and in his ancient retreat Arnauld was permitted to resume his unremitting labours.

Time must be at some discount with any man who should employ it in adjusting the 'balance of improbabilities' in such a case as this. But there is one indisputable marvel connected with it. The greatest genius, the most profound scholar, and the most eminent advocate of that age, all possessing the most ample means of knowledge, all carefully investigated, all admitted, and all defended with their pens, the miracle of the Holy Thorn. Europe at that time produced no three men more profoundly conversant with the laws of the material world, with the laws of the human mind, and with the municipal law, than Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre; and they were all sincere and earnest believers. Yet our Protestant incredulity utterly rejects both the tale itself and the inferences drawn from it, and but for such mighty names, might yield to the temptation of regarding it as too contemptible for serious notice. Why is this? It is a question which volumes might be well employed to answer. In this place, a passing notice is all that can be given to it.

Antecedently to their investigation of the evidence, Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre may be supposed to have reduced their reasonings on the subject to the following syllogism:—The true Church is distinguished from all others by the perennial possession of miraculous gifts. But the Church of Rome is the true church. Therefore, when a miracle is alleged to have happened within her fold, the presumption is not against, but in favour of the truth of the statement; and therefore, aided by that presumption, credit is due in such a case to testimony which would be insufficient to substantiate the fact under any other circumstances. *Negamus majorem*. It is not in the spirit of paradox, far less in that of irreverence or levity, that we would maintain the reverse—namely, that a church really distinguished by the permanent exercise of miraculous powers, would presumably be *not* a true church, but a false.

Probability is the expectation of the recurrence of usual sequences. Certainty is the expectation of the recurrence of sequences believed to be invariable. The disappointment of such an expectation may be the disclosure of some uniform sequence hitherto unknown; that is, one of the laws of nature; or it may be a mistake; that is, the disturbance of those laws by some power capable of controlling them. He who alleges a miracle, alleges the existence of natural laws; for there can be no exception where there is no rule. Now, to ascribe the laws of nature to any power but that of God, would be atheism. But to ascribe an *habitual* infringement of these laws to powers subordinate, yet opposed, to the divine, is not



atheistic, but is, on the contrary, consistent alike with piety and with reason.

That analogies of natural and revealed religion not only permit, but require, us thus to judge. For example, the moral law of God is love. That law is habitually infringed by human selfishness. Submission to the legitimate exercise of legitimate authority, is a law from Heaven. That law is habitually infringed by human self-will. That within the range of his powers of action man should be a free agent, is the divine law. That law, as we learn from the Gospels, was habitually infringed in the case of demoniacs.

That the blood of the dead should corrupt and not liquefy ; that houses should be built and not fly ; that diseases should be cured by therapeutics, or not at all, are all physical laws of nature—that is, of God. Those physical laws, we are told, are habitually infringed within the fold of the Roman Catholic Church. Be it so. But if so, what is the inference ? That the Roman Catholic Church is the depositary of divine truth, and the special object of divine favour ? — We wot not. Where such truth resides, and such favour rests, there will be a harmony, not elsewhere to be found, with the general laws of the divine economy, and the general principles of the divine government. The law is higher than the anomaly. The rule is more worthy than the exception. That conformity to the eternal ordinances of Heaven, whether psychological or physical, should indicate the possession of truth and holiness in a Church, is intelligible. That a systematic counteraction of any such ordinances should indicate the same, is not intelligible. If in any society any law of the divine government, whether moral or physical, is *habitually* reversed, the inference would seem to be, that such a society is subject to the control of some power opposed to the divine.

Will it be answered that *every* disturbance of the laws of God must proceed from the Author of those laws, and attest his agency and approbation ? Why so ? His moral laws are violated every instant by rebel man : why not his physical laws by rebel angels ? Moses and Paul, and that divine teacher to whom Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre bowed their hearts, and desired to bow their understandings, all assure us that this is no impossible supposition. Or will it be answered that such reasonings impugn the miracles of Christ himself ? If so, we abandon them as fallacious ; for, sooner should our right hand forget its cunning, than be employed to write one word having that tendency. But the cases are utterly dissimilar. Assume the reality both of the series of miracles recorded in the Gospels, and of the series of miracles recorded in the Roman Catholic legends, and without any inconsistency we may regard the one

as stamped with the seal of truth, and the other as bearing the impress of error. Our Redeemer's miracles blend in perfect harmony, though not in absolute unison, with those laws, physical and moral, which he established in the creation, and fulfilled in the redemption, of the world. In their occasion — in their object — in their fulfilment of prophecy — in their attendant doctrine — and in their exceptional character, they are essentially distinguished from the perennial miracles of Rome. These are at absolute discord with the laws which the miracles of Christ fulfil. If compelled to believe them true, we should not be compelled to refer them to a divine original. But that the truth of such stories as that of the Holy Thorn should ever have commanded the assent of such men as Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre, is, after all, a standing wonder, and can be accounted for only by remembering that they assumed as inevitable, and hailed as invaluable, an inference which, as it seems to us, is not to be drawn from the premises, even if established.

Judge as we may of the miraculous attestation to the innocence of Port-Royal, which thus obtained the advocacy of Pascal, sentence is irreversibly passed by mankind on the prodigies wrought, at the same time and in the same cause, by the pen of that wonder-working controversialist. In the whole compass of literature, ancient and modern, there is probably nothing in the same style which could bear a comparison with the 'Provincial Letters.' Their peculiar excellence can be illustrated only by the force of contrast; and, in that sense, the 'Letters of Junius' may afford the illustration.

To either series of anonymous satires must be ascribed the praise of exquisite address, and of irresistible vigour. Each attained an immediate and a lasting popularity; and each has exercised a powerful influence on the literature of succeeding times. But here all resemblance ends. No writer ever earned so much fame as Junius with so little claim to the respect or gratitude of his readers. He embraced no large principles; he awakened no generous feelings; he scarcely advocated any great social interest. He gives equally little proof of the love of man, and of the love of books. He contributed nothing to the increase of knowledge, and but seldom ministered to blameless delight. His topics and his thoughts were all of the passing day. His invective is merciless and extravagant; and the veil of public spirit is barely thrown over his personal antipathies and inordinate self-esteem. No man was ever so greatly indebted to mere style; yet, with all its recommendations, his is a style eminently vicious. It is laboured, pompous, antithetical — never self-forgetful, never flowing freely, never in repose. The

admiration he extorts is yielded grudgingly ; nor is there any book so universally read which might become extinct with so little loss to the world as 'The Letters of Junius.'

Reverse all this, and you have the characteristics of the 'Provincial Letters.' Their language is but the transparent, elastic, unobtrusive medium of thought. It moves with such quiet gracefulness as entirely to escape attention, until the matchless perspicacity of discussions, so incomprehensible under any management but his, forces on the mind an inquiry into the causes of so welcome a phenomenon. Pascal's wit, even when most formidable, is so tempered by kindness, as to show that the infliction of pain, however salutary, was a reluctant tribute to his supreme love of truth. His playfulness is the buoyancy of a heart which has no burden to throw off, and is gay without an effort. His indignation is never morose, vindictive, or supercilious : it is but philanthropy kindling into righteous anger and generous resentment, and imparting to them a tone of awful majesty. The unostentatious master of all learning, he finds recreation in toils which would paralyse an ordinary understanding ; yet so sublimated is that learning with the spirit of philosophy, as to make him heedless of whatever is trivial, transient, and minute, except as it suggests or leads to what is comprehensive and eternal.

But the canons of mere literary criticism were never designed to measure that which constitutes the peculiar greatness of the author of the 'Provincial Letters.' His own claim was to be tried by his peers—by those who, in common with him, possess a mental vision purified by contemplating that light in which is no darkness at all, and affections enlarged by a benevolence which, having its springs in heaven, has no limits to its diffusion on earth. Among his ascetic brethren in the valley of Port-Royal, he himself recognised the meet, if not the impartial, judges of his labours. They hailed with transport an ally who, to their own sanctity of manners, and to more than their own genius, added popular arts to which they could make no pretension. We infer indeed, though doubtfully, that they were taught by the excellent M. Singlin to regard and censure such exultation as merely human. That great spiritual anatomist probably rebuked and punished the glee which could not but agitate the innermost folds of Arnauld's heart, as he read his apologist's exquisite analysis of the *Pouvoir Prochain* and of the *Graces Suffisantes qui ne sont pas efficaces*. For history records the misgivings of Mademoiselle Pascal on the question, whether M. Singlin would put up with the indomitable gaiety which would still chequer with some gleams of mirth her

brother's cell at Les Granges, even after his preternatural ingenuity had been exhausted in rendering it the most desolate and cheerless of human abodes.

Whatever may have been his treatment of his illustrious penitents, the good man was not long permitted to guide them through their weary pilgrimage. The respite obtained for Port-Royal by the Holy Thorn and the 'Provincial Letters,' expired with the death of Mazarin, and with the authority of the Queen-mother. Louis began, as he believed, to act for himself—a vain attempt for a man who could never think for himself. The genius, such as it was, of the dead minister, had still the mastery over the inferior mind of the surviving monarch. Louis had been taught by the Cardinal to fear and to hate De Retz, Jansenism, and Port-Royal. Poor Singlin was therefore driven away, and in due time consigned to the Bastille. At the bidding of the King, a synod of the clergy of France drew up an anti-Jansenist test, to be taken by all ecclesiastics, and by all religious communities, male and female; fortified, of course, by effective penalties. They were all required to subscribe their names to a declaration that the 'five propositions,' in their heretical sense, were to be found in the *Augustinus*; nor was there any exception in favour of those who had never seen the book, or of those who could not read Latin. This was no ineffectual menace. Blow after blow fell on those who refused, and even on those who were expected to refuse, thus to condemn the Bishop of Ypres. Port-Royal was foremost among such obdurate recusants. Their schools, male and female, were dispersed. Arnauld and the other recluses were banished from the valley. The admission of novices and postulantes was interdicted to the abbess; and her ancient monastery was threatened with suppression as contumacious and heretical.

Angelique Arnauld was now sinking under the pressure of infirmity and of old age. Half a century had elapsed since the commencement of her reforms, and her tale of threescore years and ten had been fully told; but, ere she yielded her soul to Him who gave it, she rose from her dying bed to make one more effort for the preservation of the house so long devoted, under her guidance, to works of mercy and to exercises of penitence and prayer. Surrounded by a throng of weeping children, and by her elder associates maintaining their wonted composure, she for the last time, quitted Port-Royal des Champs, giving and receiving benedictions, and went to die at the convent of Port-Royal de Paris.

She found the gates guarded, and the court-yards filled by a troop of archers, the executioners of the royal mandate for expelling the scholars, novices, postulantes, and other unprofessed in-



mates of the house. During eight successive days one after another of these helpless women was torn from the place around which their affections had twined; and from the arms of the dying mother, whom they loved with the tenderness of children, and regarded with more than filial reverence. Seventy-five persons were thus successively separated from her, as from hour to hour she descended to the tomb, under bodily and mental sufferings, described with fearful minuteness in the obituaries of Port-Royal. 'At length our good Lord has seen fit to deprive us of all. Fathers, sisters, disciples, children — all are gone. Blessed be the name of the Lord.' Such was her announcement to Madame de Sevigné of the emptying of this first vial of kingly wrath. To the Queen-mother she addressed herself in a loftier, though not in a less gentle tone. At each momentary remission of her agonies, she dictated to Anne of Austria a letter, long and justly celebrated as a model of epistolary eloquence. It has no trace of debility, still less of resentment. Her defence is as clear and as collected as though, in the fulness of health, she had been conducting the cause of another. Without a reproach or a murmur, she exposes the wrongs of her sisterhood, and the error of her persecutors. For herself she asks no sympathy; but, from the verge of the world she had so long renounced, and was now about to quit for ever, she invokes from the depositaries of worldly power the justice they owed to man, and the submission due to the ordinances of Heaven. 'Now, my earthly business is done!' was her grateful exclamation as this letter was closed; and then commenced a mental and bodily strife, recorded, perhaps, but too faithfully by her biographers. These pages, at least, are no fit place for the delineation of a scene over which the sternest spectator must have wept, and the most hardened must have prayed fervently for the sufferer and for himself. From the dark close of a life so holy and so blameless, and from the hope, and peace, and joy, which at length cast over her departing spirit some radiance from that better state on the confines of which she stood, lessons may be drawn which we have no commission to teach, and which are perhaps best learned without the intervention of any human teacher. Yet, even in Port-Royal itself, there were not wanting some to whom this admonition of the vanity of human things was addressed in vain.

Among that venerable society, the Sœur Flavie Passart was unrivalled in the severity of her self-discipline, and the splendour of her superhuman gifts. As often as illness confined her to her bed, so often did a miracle restore her. The dead returned to her with messages from the other world. No saint in the calendar withheld his powerful influence in the court of heaven when she invoked it.

Like many wiser folks, Sœur Flavie discovered at last, and doubtless to her own surprise, that she had become (there are none but masculine terms to express it) a liar and a knave. The same discovery was opportunely made by her associates, and arrested her progress to the elective dignities of the abbey. A penitent confession of her Jansenist errors, a denunciation of the more eminent ladies of Port-Royal as her seducers, and a retraction of her heretical belief in the innocence of Jansenius, might, however, still pave her way to the abbatial throne. So judged the Sœur Flavie, and so decided M. Perifixe, the then Archbishop of Paris. She merely asked the imprisonment of twenty-six of her rivals. He cheerfully accorded so reasonable a boon. Repairing in pontifical state to the Parisian monastery, he again tendered the anti-Jansenist test. Angelique was gone; but her spirit and her constancy survived. The simple-hearted nuns thought that 'it would be a mere falsehood to attest the existence of 'five propositions' in a book which they had never seen, and could not read; and truth, they knew, was the command of God, let Pope, Cardinal, or Archbishop say what they would to the contrary. Perifixe interdicted their admission to the holy sacrament. 'Well, my lord,' they replied, 'there is in heaven a Judge who reads the heart, and to him we commend our cause.' 'Ay, ay,' rejoined the exemplary prelate, 'when we get to heaven it will be time enough to consider that, and see how things go there.'

Eight days elapsed; and still no change of purpose, no subscription to the test. Preceded by his crosier, the mitre on his brows, his train borne by ecclesiastics, and followed by a long line of archers, the Archbishop reappeared. Much he discoursed respecting his own mildness, and much of the obduracy of the nuns. In proof of both, twenty-three of their number were conveyed to separate places of confinement. But the fruits of her treachery were not reaped by the Sœur Flavie. By the influence of the Archbishop, the Sœur Dorothée Perdreau was elected abbess. That lady established her residence at Paris. She effected a final separation of the two monasteries; and gave entertainments at the Parisian convent which might vie with the most brilliant of any which formed the boast of the neighbouring hotels. For ten months her exiled sisters remained in prison. Perifixe then ordered their return to Port-Royal des Champs, there to be excluded from the sacraments of the Church, and to die without her benedictions. The recluses of the valley were to be seen there no more. They lived in hiding-places, or pined away in dungeons. Singlin died of extremity of suffering in the Bastille. It must be admitted, therefore, that if the existence of the 'five propositions' in the

*Augustinus* was not verified by the attestation of a score or two of old ladies, Louis and his clergy have not to bear the responsibility of so great a misfortune to the Church.

Twelve years before, the miracle of the Holy Thorn and the genius of Pascal had rescued Port-Royal from impending destruction. A person scarcely less unlike the common herd of mortals than the author of the 'Provincial Letters,' and whose elevation had been owing to events which some may think more miraculous than the cure of Pascal's niece, now interposed in their behalf, and with not inferior success.

Anne Geneviève de Bourbon was born in the year 1619, in the castle of Vincennes, where her father, Henry, Prince of Orleans, was then confined. The misfortunes of her family, and especially the execution of the Constable Montmorency, her maternal uncle, had predisposed in early youth, to serious thought, a mind distinguished to the last by an insatiable craving for strong emotions. To renounce the world, and to take the veil among the sisterhood of Carmelites of the Faubourg St. Jacques, were the earliest of the projects she had formed to baffle the foul fiend ennui. A counter-project, devised by her mother, was, that the young princess should present herself at a court ball. Maternal authority, perhaps inclination, on the one side, and conscientious scruples on the other, balanced and distressed the spirit of the high-born maiden. She betook herself for guidance to the Faubourg St. Jacques. A council on the arduous question was held with all the forms, conventual and theatrical, which the statutes of the Order and the fancy of the nuns required or suggested. As presidents, sat two of their number, one impersonating the grace of Penitence, the other the virtue of Discretion. From the judgment-seat so occupied, went forth the sentence that Anne Geneviève de Bourbon should attend the ball, and should surrender herself 'de bonne foi' to all the dress and ornaments prepared for her; but that in immediate contact with her person she should be armed with the penitential robe of hair-cloth commonly called a *cilice*. Above the talisman which thus encircled that young and lovely form, glowed the bright panoply of the *marchande de modes*. Beneath it throbbed a heart responsive in every pulse to the new intoxication. Penitence and Discretion took their flight, no more to return till, after the lapse of many a chequered year, the *cilice* was again drawn over a heart, then, alas! aching with remorse, and bowed down with the contrite retrospect of many a crime and many a folly.

At the Hôtel de Rambouillet, she was initiated, with her brother, afterwards 'the great Condé,' into the Parisian mystery of

throwing over the cold hard lineaments of downright selfishness the fine woven draperies of polite literature, of sentimentality, and of taste. She had scarcely read any books; but she could discourse eloquently on all. Mistress of the histrionic art, all words fell bewitchingly from a voice with which every look, and gesture, and attitude combined in graceful harmony. De Retz notices the exquisite effect of the sudden bursts of gaiety which would at times dispel her habitual, but not inexpressive, langour. Sarazin and Voiture were proud to receive their laurels from her hand, or to beg them at her feet. Statesmen and generals sought, or seemed to seek, her counsels. Even her mitred correspondents infused into their pastoral admonitions a delicacy and a glow of language, which reveal alike her skill to fascinate, and their desire to please. Vows of celibacy no longer promised an escape from lassitude. At the age of twenty-three she gave her hand to Henri d'Orléans, Duc de Longueville, who had already numbered forty-seven years. The Duke repaired as plenipotentiary to the conferences at Munster. The Duchess remained at Paris, the idol of the court. Unexplored, at least by us, be the scandalous chronicle of a scandalous age. She rejoined him in time to shelter, if not entirely to save, her reputation.

As she floated down the Meuse in a royal progress (for it was nothing less), the sister of Condé was received with more than royal honours. Troops lined the banks; fortresses poured forth their garrisons to welcome her approach; the keys of Namur, then held by Spain, were laid at her feet; complimentary harangues hailed her arrival at Liége, Maestricht, and Ruremonde; and amidst the roar of cannon, and the acclamations of ten thousand voices, the triumphant beauty was restored to the arms of her husband. At Munster she exhibited the state and splendour of a crowned head. But her heart was depressed by ennui, if not agitated by more guilty emotions. Tours were undertaken, palaces built, wars of etiquette successfully waged with rival princesses, diplomatic intrigues twisted and untwisted: but gloom still settled on the spirit of her to whose diversion all other minds were ministering.

She returned to Paris. Condé had exalted the glories of her house. Mazarin got up an Italian opera for her amusement. Benserade and Voiture referred to her award the question, then agitating the whole Parisian world, of the comparative excellence of their rival sonnets. She became a mother. On every side the tedium of existence was assailed by new excitements; but melancholy still brooded over her. Relief was however at hand. The dissensions, the wars, the intrigues of the *Fronde*, filled the void



which nothing else could fill. Her share in that mad revel is known to all the readers of De Retz, La Rochefoucault, De Montpensier, and De Motteville. Her younger brother, the Prince de Conti, was but a puppet in her hands. With Condé she quarrelled one day, and made it up the next. De Retz was alternately her ruler and her dupe. Marsaillac alone acquired a lasting influence over her mind. He flattered, amused, animated, and governed her, to whose government alone the factious and the frivolous were alike willing to bow. With her infant in her arms, she appeared on the balcony, at the Hôtel de Ville, 'beautiful,' says De Retz, 'with her dress apparently, but not really, neglected; while at the Grève, from the pavement to the tiles, was a countless multitude of men shouting with transport, and women shedding tears of tenderness.' Never did mob-idolatry assume a more bewitching aspect. Hushed into affectionate silence were the harsh voices of the many-headed monster, as the peerless dame gave birth to 'Charles Paris,' her second son. Crowded even was that sick-chamber with black-robed councillors, and plumed officers, soliciting her commands for the defence of the blockaded capital.

Peace came, and she met almost on equal terms the haughty widow and mother of the kings of France. For her brother and her husband, she demanded and obtained the government of provinces; for herself, a state ball at the Hôtel de Ville, with the presence of the queen-mother to grace her triumph; for Marsaillac, the entrée at the Louvre in his carriage; for his wife, a tabouret.

There are limits to human endurance. Against the entrée and the tabouret the whole nobility of France awoke in generous resentment. Astræa once more took her flight. Condé, Conti, and poor De Longueville himself, were conducted to Vincennes; our heroine fled to Normandy. Besieged in the castle of Dieppe, she escaped on foot, and, after a march of some leagues along the coast, reached a fishing-boat, which lay at anchor there, awaiting her arrival. A storm was raging; but, in defiance of all remonstrances, she resolved to embark. In an instant she was struggling for life in the water. Rescued with difficulty, but nothing daunted, she mounted behind a horseman, and for fifteen days evaded the pursuit of her enemies, in mean and desolate hiding-places. At length, reaching Havre, an English vessel conveyed her to Rotterdam. From that disastrous eclipse, she emerged with undiminished splendour. From Stenay, Turenne advanced to meet her at the head of all his forces. She became a party with him to the convention by which the King of Spain bound himself to maintain the war with France till the liberation of the three captive princes; and sixty thousand crowns were promised for the support of

the table and equipages of Turenne and the Princesse de Longueville. That more tender bonds than those of war and treason did not unite them, is ascribed by her biographers to her preference for one La Moussaye, the commandant of Stenay. There she braved the denunciations of her sovereign, opposing one manifesto to another, and adding to her other glories the praise of diplomatic eloquence.

Again the centre of all intrigue, the delirium, whether ambitious or voluptuous, of her heart, yielded for a while (and where beats the heart which is not enigmatical?) to remembrances, at once bitter and soothing, of the Carmelites of St. Jacques, with whom, in days of youth and innocency, she had joined in far different aspirations. But in the *phantasmagoria* at Paris the scenes are again shifted. The parliaments remonstrate, the Princes are enlarged, the Cardinal exiled; and a royal declaration attests the innocence of Madame de Longueville. 'Vous n'êtes plus criminelle, si ce n'est de lèse-amours,' was the greeting on this occasion of her favourite Sarazin. She rewarded the poet with an embassy to the Spanish government; for the Duchesse had now undertaken a negotiation for peace between the two crowns. Her second triumph, however, was still incomplete. She returned in all the pomp of a conqueror to Paris, and once more met on equal terms the majesty of France.

It may reasonably be doubted whether there exists at this day one human being who has found leisure and inclination to study with exact attention, in all its tedious details, the history of the wars of the 'Fronde.' But that they disturbed the peace, and postponed the rising greatness, of a mighty nation, they would have as little to commend them to serious regard as the cabals one may suppose to distract the fair council presiding over the internal economy of Almacks. To assert, during the weakness of a long minority, some popular rights not otherwise to be maintained, and to restore the greater nobility to the powers of which Richelieu had dispossessed them, were indeed motives which gave some show of dignity to the first movement of the Frondeurs; but meaner passions, more frivolous questions, interests more nakedly selfish, or in themselves more contemptible, never before or since roused a people to war, or formed a pretext for rebellion. Cardinals, Judges, Monarchs, Princesses, Courtiers, and Generals whirl before the eye in that giddy maze—intriguing, lying, jesting, imprisoning, and killing, as though Bacchus, Momus, and Moloch had for a while usurped a joint and absolute dominion over the distracted land.

Among the figurantes in this dance of death, none is more conspicuous than the Duchesse de Longueville. In the third and

last of those preposterous wars, the royal authority triumphed, and her star declined; but it now set to rise again in a new and far purer radiance. Like the wisest of the sons of men, she had applied her heart to see if there was any good thing under the sun; and, like him, she returned with a spirit oppressed by the hopeless pursuit, and proclaiming that all is vanity. 'I have no wish so ardent' (such is her confession to the Prioress of the Carmelites) 'as to see this war at an end, that, for the rest of my days, I may dwell with you, and apart from all the world besides. Till peace is concluded, I may not do so. My life seems to have been given me but to prove how bitter and how oppressive are the sorrows of this mortal existence. My attachments to it are broken, or rather crushed. Write to me often, and confirm the loathing I feel for this sublunary state.'

It was a weary way which the returning penitent had to retrace. Now rising towards the heaven to which she aspired, her fainting spirit would again sink down to the earth she had too much loved. Long and arduous was the struggle — tardy, and to the last precarious, the conquest. But the conquest was achieved. Gainsay it who will, the spirit of man is the not unfrequent, though the hidden, scene of revolutions as real as that which, from the seed corrupting in the soil beneath us, draws forth the petals, diffusing on every side their fragrance, and reflecting in every varied hue the light of heaven. He who, with disappointed hopes, and the satiety of all the pleasures which earth has to offer, seeks refuge in that sanctuary which in the heat and confidence of youth he had despised, may well expect that human judges will note the change with incredulity or derision: nor, perhaps, has he much right to complain. There ever must be some ground for others to doubt whether the seeming love of long-neglected virtues be more than a real distaste for long-practised vices. That the *rouée* should pass into the *ennuyée*, and the *ennuyée* into the *dévoté*, may appear as natural as that the worm should become a chrysalis, and the chrysalis a butterfly. To the wits be their jests, and to the mockers their gibes. To those who can feel for some of the deepest agonies of our common nature, such jests will be at least less welcome than the belief that, when innocence is gone, all is not lost; and the conviction, that over the soul blighted and depraved by criminal indulgence, may still be effectually brooding an influence more gentle than a mother's love, and mightier than all the confederate powers of darkness and of guilt.

Few readers of the later correspondence of the Duchesse de Longueville will doubt that the change in her character was the result of such a renovating energy. At the age of thirty-four she

finally retired from the cabals in which she had borne so conspicuous a part. Condé had now taken up arms against her native country, and Turenne commanded her armies. The Duchesse mourned alike the success and the reverses of her brother. De Longueville, a kind-hearted man, hailed with unabated tenderness her return to the paths of wisdom and peace. She watched with true conjugal care over his declining years, and even extended her kindness to one of his illegitimate daughters.

Touched by her altered conduct, the King and the Queen-mother admitted her not merely to their favour, but to a high place in their regard; nor are there many incidents in the life of Louis so amiable, as the affectionate gentleness of his demeanour to this once dangerous but now self-humbled enemy. On the death of her husband, she expended immense sums in the attempt to repair, in some degree, the calamities which the war of the Princes had inflicted on the peasantry. In a single year she restored to freedom, at her own expense, nine hundred persons imprisoned for debt; and had a list of no less than four thousand pensioners subsisting altogether on her bounty. The austere penances, which, at least, attested her sincerity, were combined, on all becoming occasions, with the princely magnificence due to her exalted station. Her eldest son, the Comte Du Dunois, a feeble-minded youth, turned Jesuit, took orders, escaped to Rome, and was placed under permanent restraint. The Comte St. Paul, her only other child, was a wild profligate. He enjoyed ecclesiastical benefices of the annual value of 50,000 crowns, which she compelled him to resign unconditionally to the disposal of the King.

Louis revered and applauded such unwonted disinterestedness, and exerted all the magic of his flattery to win her back again to the court and to the world. But she had learnt a salutary lesson of self-distrust. In the valley of Port-Royal she built a modest residence, where she found repose, if not serenity; and soothed with humble hopes a spirit too deeply contrite to be visited by more buoyant feelings. Her own hand has traced the history of her declining years; nor have the most pathetic preachers of that age of pulpit eloquence bequeathed to us a more impressive admonition. Whoever would learn what are the woes of ministering, by reckless self-indulgence, to the morbid cravings of the heart for excitement; or how revolting is the late return to more tranquil pursuits; or how gloomy is the shadow which criminal passions, even when exorcised, will yet cast over the soul they have long possessed; or how, through that gloom, a light pure as its divine original, may dawn over the benighted mind with still expanding warmth and brightness — should study the Letters



and the Confessions of Anne Geneviève, Duchesse de Longueville.

Such, and so conversant with the ways of the world, was the diplomatist who at length appeared for the rescue of the ladies of Port-Royal. No less skilful hand could have unravelled the folds in which the subject had been wrapped by intrigue and bigotry.

To explain what was the task she undertook, we must return a little on our former steps.

The original anti-Jansenist test had been promulgated by a synod of the clergy of France, adopted by the Sorbonne, and enforced by Louis. To the remonstrances of the nuns against being required to attest by their signatures a matter of fact of which they had, and could have, no knowledge, the King had answered only by reiterating the demand for a 'pure and simple' subscription. 'His Majesty,' observed the Princesse de Guiméné, 'is supreme. He can make princes of the blood, bishops, and archbishops. Why not martyrs also?' It was a branch of the royal prerogative which he was nothing loath to exercise. De Retz abdicated the see of Paris, and was succeeded by De Marca, the author of the Formulary. Availing themselves of so happy an occasion, the Jesuits at Clermont drew up a thesis, in which was propounded for the acceptance of the faithful, the naked dogma of Papal infallibility, not only on points of doctrine, but as to mere matters of fact. Arnauld and his friends protested. Their protest was refuted by the hand and the torch of one of the great polemics of that age—the public executioner. De Marca did not live long; and his death brought with it a truce in this holy war. His successor in the see of Paris, M. de Perifixe, resumed it, but with greater subtlety. He taught that it was enough if a matter of fact, asserted by the Pope, were believed not *d'une foi divine*, but *d'une foi humaine*. Whether, in the Virgilian elysium, the recompense awarded to the inventors of useful arts awaits the authors of useful distinctions, has not been revealed to us; but if so, De Perifixe may there have found his recompense. On earth it was his hard fate to be refuted by Nicole, to be laughed at by the Parisians, and to be opposed by the ladies of Port-Royal. They had no faith, divine or human, and they would profess none, as to the contents of a large folio written in a language of which they were entirely ignorant. 'Pure as angels,' said the incensed Archbishop; 'they are proud as devils!' How he punished their pride has already been recorded.

When a great dignitary has lost his temper there is nothing which he should more studiously avoid than the being hooked into the sort of contemporary record which the French call a *procès*

*verbal*. In the midst of the nuns of Port-Royal, De Perifixe had stormed and scolded more in the style of a *poissarde* than of an Archbishop of Paris; and when the chronicle of all his sayings and doings on the occasion stole into light, with all the forms of notarial certificates, he found himself, to his unutterable dismay, the hero of as broad a farce as had ever delighted that laughter-loving city. It was the single joke of which the nuns had ever been either the willing or the unintentional authors; and they soon found to their cost that it was no light matter to have directed the current of ridicule against an archiepiscopal, and, through him, against a royal censor.

The invincible opposition of the Port-Royalists to the test, had awakened a more extended resistance. Men had begun to deny the right of assemblies of the clergy, or of the King himself, to impose such subscriptions. To retreat was, however, no longer possible. Louis, therefore, by the advice of the Jesuits, desired the Pope himself first to draw up a Formula, which should declare his own infallible knowledge of matters of fact: and then to require the universal acceptance of it. Alexander VII. exultingly complied. Subscription to De Marca's test was now exacted by papal authority, with the addition that the subscribers should call on the Deity himself to attest their sincerity. To this demand the great body of the clergy of France submitted; but still the resistance of the nuns of Port-Royal was unsubdued. Four years of persecution—of mean, unmanly, worrying persecution—followed. The history of it fills many volumes of the *Conventual Annals*, exciting in the mind of him who reads them, feelings of amazement and disgust, of respect and pity, strong enough to carry him through what it must be confessed is but a wearisome task. From the poor remnant of earthly comforts which these aged women had retained, the mean-spirited king, his bigoted confessors, and his absurd archbishop, daily stole whatever could be so pilfered. From their means of preparing for the world where the wicked cease from troubling, every deduction was made which sacerdotal tyranny could enforce. But no tyranny could induce them to call on the God of Truth to attest a lie. One after another went down, with no priestly absolution, to graves which no priest would bless; strong even amidst the weakness and the mortal agonies of nature, in the assurance, that the path to heaven could not be found in disobedience to the immutable laws which Heaven itself had established.

Among the bishops of France, four had been faithful enough to insist on the distinction between the *droit* and the *fait*. In publishing the papal bull, they attached to it an express statement

of their dissent from this new pretension of Rome. Of these prelates, one was a brother of the great Arnauld, and bore the same name. Alexander VII. was now on his death-bed; he had even received extreme unction. But at that awful hour he retained enough of human or of papal feeling to launch against the four prelates a brief full of menaces, which it devolved on his successor, Rospigliosi, to execute.

But Clement IX. was a man of a far greater and more Christian spirit. He had mourned over the distractions of the Church, and had made it his appropriate glory to mediate between the contending crowns of Spain and Portugal. To him the Duchesse de Longueville addressed herself on behalf of Port-Royal, in a letter of the most insinuating and impressive eloquence. His nuncio at Paris was made to feel all the powers of that fascinating influence which she still knew how to employ. At her hotel, and in her presence, a select committee met daily for the management of this affair. It was composed of three bishops, aided by Arnauld and Nicole. Condé himself was induced by his sister to lend the weight of his authority to her projects. Even Le Tellier was circumvented by the toils spread for him by this great mistress of intrigue. For nearly eighteen months she laboured to overcome the obstacles which the pride of Rome and of Louis, and the ill-will of the Father Annat, his confessor, opposed to her. All difficulties at length yielded to her perseverance and her diplomatic skill. The four bishops were content to denounce the 'five propositions' as heretical, and to promise 'a submission of respect and discipline,' as to the *fact*, declaring that 'they would not contest the papal decision, but would maintain an absolute silence on the subject.' One of them insisted on adding an express statement of the fallibility of the Church respecting such matters of fact as the contents of a book. Clement IX. was, however, satisfied. Peace was restored to the Gallican Church. Medals were struck, speeches made, and solemn audiences accorded by Louis to Arnauld and his associates. De Saci and his fellow-prisoners were set at liberty. Port-Royal was once more permitted to recruit her monastery, to open her schools, and to give shelter to her dispersed recluses. Among the events which signalised the pacification of Clement IX., one demands especial notice. Malebranche had signed the Formulary. He now frankly avowed that he had condemned Jansenius without reading his book, and implored the pardon of God and of man for his guilty compliance.

It may perhaps be consolatory to some, in our own times, to be informed, that in censuring as heretical the book of a professor of divinity, of which they knew nothing but the title-page, they

might have pleaded the example of so great a man — a comfort, however, to which they will not be entitled, unless they imitate also the example of his repentance.

Ten years elapsed from this pacification before the close of the extraordinary career of the Duchesse de Longueville; and they were years distinguished in the chronicle of Port-Royal by little else than the peaceful lives and the tranquil deaths of many of the inhabitants of the valley. In their annals are to be found more than a century of names, to which their admirers have promised not only an eternal reward, but such immortality as the world has to bestow.

Overburdened as we are by the ever increasing debt of admiration to the illustrious dead, these promises will hardly be fulfilled, at least by our busy age: nor is it easy even for one who has carefully travelled through the whole of these biographies, to select from among the female candidates for posthumous renown, those to whom such homage is especially due. Their portraitures have a strong resemblance to each other. To each, in her turn, is awarded the praise of passive virtue, of fervent piety, and of austerities from which nature shrinks. If a sense of the ludicrous will occasionally provoke a passing smile, or if a sigh must now and then be given to the melancholy superstitions of which they were the blameless victims, it is at least impossible to contemplate, irreverently or unmoved, the image of purity and peace, of mutual kindness and cheerful acquiescence in the Divine will, which discloses itself at each successive aspect of that holy sisterhood.

The sternest Protestant cannot rouse himself at once from the influence of this course of reading; nor resume, without an effort, his conviction, that it is amidst the charities of domestic life that female virtue finds the highest exercise, and female piety the most sublime elevation. He knows, indeed, that exuberant as is the charter of his faith in models of every human virtue, and in precepts of wisdom under every varied form, it contains not so much as a single example, or a solitary admonition, from which the Confessors of Port-Royal could have shown that a retreat to such cloisters was in accordance with the revealed will of God. He knows also, that thus to counteract the eternal laws of nature and the manifest designs of Providence, must be folly, however specious the pretext or solemn the guise which such folly may assume. He is assured that filial affection, cheerfully, temperately, bountifully, and thankfully using the gifts of heaven, is the best tribute which man can render to Him who claims for himself the name and the character of a Father. But with all this knowledge, the disciple of Luther or of Calvin will yet close the *vies édifiantes* and the



*nécrologies* of these holy women, not without a reluctance to doubt, and a wish to believe, that they really occupied the high and awful station to which they aspired; and stood apart from the world, its pollutions, and its cares, to offer with purer hearts than others, and with more acceptable intercessions, the sacrifice of an uninterrupted worship, replete with blessings to themselves and to mankind. Peace then to their errors, and unquoted be any of the innumerable extravagances which abound in the records of their lives. To the recluses who shared, without ever breaking, their solitude, we rather turn for illustrations of the spirit which animated and characterised the valley of Port-Royal.

On the pacification of Clement IX., Louis Sebastian le Nain de Tillemont, who had been educated in the schools of Nicole and Lancelot, returned in the maturity of his manhood to a hermitage which he had erected near the court-yard of the abbey. Such had been his attainments as a boy, that the pupil had soon exhausted the resources of those profound teachers, and in his twentieth year had commenced those works on ecclesiastical history, which have placed him in the very foremost rank, if not at the head, of all who have laboured in that fertile though rugged field. To the culture of it his life was unceasingly devoted. Though under the direction of De Saci he had obtained admission to holy orders, he refused all the rich preferments pressed on him by the admirers of his genius. Year after year passed over him, unmarked by any event which even the pen of his affectionate biographer, Fontaine, could record. ‘He lived,’ says that amiable writer, ‘alone, and with no witness but God himself, who was ever present with him, and who was all in all to him.’ It was only in an habitual and placid communion with that one associate, that he sought relief from his gigantic toils; and with a spirit recruited by that communion, he returned to the society of the Emperors, the Popes, the Fathers, and the Saints, who were to him as companions and as friends. To a man long conversant with the anxieties of a secular calling, the soft lights and the harmonious repose of such a picture may perhaps exhibit a delusive aspect; yet it can hardly be a delusion to believe, that for such colloquy with the minds which yet live in books, and with that Mind which is the source of all life, would be wisely abandoned whatever ambition, society, fame, or fortune, have to confer on their most favoured votaries.

So at least judged one, whom fame and fortune wooed with their most alluring smiles. Racine had been trained at Port-Royal, in the same schools and by the same masters as Tillemont. For the great dramatist, no sympathy could of course be expressed by the austere dwellers in the desert; and perhaps the friendship,

of Boileau may have consoled him for the alienation of his old teacher Nicole. But when, in his *Visionnaires*, that devout and learned man denounced the writers of stage-plays as the *Empoisonneurs publics des âmes*, Racine keenly felt and resented the reproach. Like most controversialists, he lived to repent the asperity of his language: but his repentance yielded fruits, the like of which have rarely been gathered from that bitter stem. The author of *Andromaque* not only sought the pardon, and regained the friendship of Arnauld and Nicole, but actually renounced the drama, exhorted his son to abandon poetry, became the advocate and the historian of Port-Royal, and secured for his bones a resting-place in that consecrated soil.

Happily for the world, a method was afterwards discovered of reconciling the exercise of Racine's genius with the severe principles which Nicole had instilled into him when a boy, and had revived with such decisive effect in his riper days. *Esther* and *Athalie* were allowed, even at Port-Royal, to be works not unseemly for a man whose single talent was that of writing verses, and who, if he could do nothing better, was at least acknowledged to do that well. But alas for human consistency! He who traced those majestic scenes where reliance on the Divine arm triumphs over all human regards and terrors, was doomed himself to pine away and even to die of a hard saying of the hard master it was his ill fate to serve. His guilt was to have drawn up a Memoir on the means of relieving the starving poor at Paris. His punishment, the indignant exclamation of the great Louis, 'Because he is an all-accomplished versifier, does he presume that he knows everything? Because he is a great poet, does he mean to become a minister?' Well might the sensitive spirit which such a feather could crush, wish with Wolsey that he had served his God as faithfully as his King, and repine amidst the pageantries of Versailles for the devout composure of Port-Royal.

And many were the eminent men who sought and enjoyed that repose. There dwelt the Prince de Conti, one of the heroes of the Fronde, and still more memorable for his penitence and restitutions; of whom it is recorded, that his young children were so impressed by his absolute devotedness to the Divine will, as to conceal from him the story of Abraham, lest the example of the sacrifice of Isaac should be imitated at their own expense. There, too, resided the Duc de Laincourt, on whom fortune had exhausted all her bounties, and who, under the loss of them all, rose to the utmost heroism of a meek, unrepining, and cheerful resignation. Pontchateau, a noble, a courtier, an ambassador, and at length the apostolical prothonotary at Rome, brought all the strange vicissi-

tudes of his life to an end, by becoming, under the name of Le Mercier, a common labourer in the gardens, and a devout worshipper in the church of Port-Royal. But this chronicle of worthies, spreading out into interminable length, must give place to a very brief account of the events which reduced to a desert the solitudes which they had cultivated and adorned.

Amidst the contentions of the Gallican Church, full proof had been given of the keen edge of those weapons which might be borrowed from the papal arsenals. It readily occurred to the sufferers, that the resources which the Jesuits had so successfully employed, might be turned against themselves. Pascal had startled the civilised world with the exposure of Molinist errors, hostile not merely to the Catholic creed, but to those principles of virtue which are the very cement of human society. They had imputed to Jansenius five heresies on the obscure subjects of Divine grace and human freedom; but who could number the propositions in which Escobar and his associates had spurned the authority of the decalogue itself? The assiduity of the bishops of Arras and St. Pons collected sixty-five of these scandalous dogmas, and these they transmitted to Rome in a memorial of which Nicole was believed to be the writer, and known to be the translator. Righteous, unqualified, and decisive was the papal condemnation of the morality of the Jesuits; but fatal to the repose of Port-Royal was this triumph of one of her brightest ornaments. The Duchesse de Longueville had lately died, and with her had disappeared the motive which had induced Louis to show some forbearance to the objects of her affectionate solicitude. Harlay now governed the see of Paris. He was a man of disreputable character, and the mere instrument of the King. Louis was in bondage to Madame de Maintenon, and she to the Jesuits. Their vengeance scarcely sought a pretext, and soon found its gratification.

In the exercise of his archiepiscopal authority, Harlay banished De Saci, Tillemont, and Pontchateau, from the valley of Port-Royal. Nicole and Arnauld sought shelter in the Netherlands from his menaces. The postulantes and scholars were once more expelled, and the admission of novices was again forbidden.

At this epoch, another lady of the house of Arnauld—a cousin and namesake of the Mère Angelique—was invested with the dignity of abbess. Her genius, her virtue, and her learning, are the subject of eulogies too indistinct to be impressive, and too hyperbolic to win implicit credence. Yet, if she was the writer of the memoir in defence of her monastery which bears her name, there was no apparent obstacle, but her sex and her profession, to her successful rivalry of the greatest masters of juridical eloquence

in France. Ineffectual, however, would have been all the rhetoric which ever adorned the parliament of Paris, to avert the threatened doom of the stronghold of Jansenism. As he approached the tomb, Harlay's resentment became more deep and settled. He left it a fatal inheritance to his successor, the Cardinal De Noailles. A weak and obstinate, but not an unfeeling man, De Noailles owed his promotion to the see of Paris to his fixed hostility to Port-Royal, and his known willingness to hazard the odium of subverting that ancient seat of piety and learning. The apology soon presented itself.

Several years had elapsed since the dispute about 'Le Droit et le Fait de Jansenius' had apparently reached its close. Revolving this passage of bygone history, a priest had improved or amused his leisure, by drawing up, for the decision of the Sorbonne, 'a case of conscience,' which, it must be owned, was a hard problem for the most expert casuist. Of two infallible Popes, one had with his dying breath affirmed as a momentous truth, a proposition which the other had abandoned, if not retracted. What was it the duty of the faithful to believe on the subject? Forty doctors answered, that it was enough to maintain a respectful silence as to the 'fait de Jansenius.' Archbishopal mandaments, treatises of the learned, royal orders in council, and parliamentary arrêts, flew thick and fast through the troubled air, and obscured the daylight of common sense. Again the eldest son of the Church invoked the authority of her spiritual father. In oracular darkness went forth from the Vatican, the sentence, that 'respectful silence is not a sufficient deference for apostolical constitutions.' This is what is called in ecclesiastical story, the bull 'Vineam Domini Sabaoth.' Under shelter of an abstract theorem which no Catholic could deny, it ingeniously concealed the conflict of opinion of two infallible Pontiffs. Subscription of their unqualified assent to the bull 'Vineam' was demanded from the nuns of Port-Royal, and from them alone. They cheerfully subscribed; but with the addition, that their signature was not to be understood as derogating from what had been determined on the pacification of Clement IX. This was their final and their fatal act of contumacy. Decree after decree was fulminated by De Noailles. He forbade the admission of any new members of their house. He prohibited the election of an abbess. He despoiled them of a large part of their estates. He interdicted to them all the sacraments of the Church. He obtained a papal bull for the suppression of their monastery; and in October, 1709, he carried it into effect by an armed force, under the Marquis D'Argenson.

There is in Westminster Hall a tradition that an eminent advo-



cate of our own times addressed to the House of Peers, during sixteen successive days, a speech, in the course of which (such is the calculation) he employed all the words in Johnson's Dictionary, one with another, just thirty-five times over. Neither boasting the copiousness, nor presuming on the patience which were at the command of that great lawyer, we have compressed into a few sentences the history of a contest, which, if not so abridged, would have swollen to the utmost limits of that unparalleled oration. But to those who have leisure for such studies, and who delight in a well-fought forensic field, we can promise that pleasure in the highest degree from a perusal of the contest between the aged ladies of Port Royal, and their royal, mitred, and ermined antagonists. Never was a more gallant struggle against injustice. After exhausting all the resources of legal defence, those helpless and apparently feeble women disputed every inch of ground by protests, remonstrances, and petitions, which, for the moment at least, held their assailants in check, and which yet remain a wondrous monument of their perseverance and capacity, and of the absolute self-control which, amidst the outpourings of their griefs, and the exposure of their wrongs, restrained every expression of asperity or resentment. Never was the genius of the family of Arnauld exhibited with greater lustre, and never with less effect.

In a grey autumnal morning, a long file of armed horsemen, under the command of D'Argenson, was seen to issue from the woods which overhung the ill-fated monastery. In the name of Louis he demanded and obtained admission into that sacred inclosure. Seated on the abbatial throne, he summoned the nuns into his presence. They appeared before him veiled, silent, and submissive. Their papers, their title-deeds, and their property were then seized, and proclamation made of a royal decree which directed their immediate exile. It was instantly carried into effect. Far and wide along the summits of the neighbouring hills, might be seen a thronging multitude of the peasants whom they had instructed, and of the poor whom they had relieved. Bitter cries of indignation and of grief, joined with fervent prayers, arose from those helpless people, as, one after another the nuns entered the carriages drawn up for their reception. Each pursued her solitary journey to the prison destined for her. Of these venerable women, some had passed their eightieth year, and the youngest was far advanced in life. Labouring under paralysis and other infirmities of old age, several of them reached at once their prisons and their graves. Others died under the distress and fatigues of their journey. Some possessed energies which no sufferings could subdue. Madame de Remicourt, for example, was kept for two years

in solitary confinement; in a cell lighted and ventilated only through the chimney; without fire, society, or books. 'You may persecute, but you will never change Madame de Remicourt,' said the Archbishop; 'for' (such was his profound view of the phenomenon) 'she has a square head, and people with square heads are always obstinate.'

Last in the number of exiles appeared, at the gates of the abbey, the prioress, Louise de St. Anastasie Mesnil de Courtiaux. She had seen her aged sisters one by one quit for ever the abode, the associates, and the employments of their lives. To each she had given her parting benediction. She shed no tear, she breathed no murmur, nor for a moment betrayed the dignity of her office, nor the constancy of her mind. 'Be faithful to the end,' were the last words which she addressed to the last companion of her sorrows. And nobly did she fulfil her own counsels. She was conducted to a convent, where, under a close guard, she was compelled to endure the utmost rigours of a jail. Deprived of all those religious comforts which it is in the power of man to minister, she enjoyed a solace, and found a strength, which it was not in the power of man to take away. In common with the greater part of her fellow-sufferers, she died without any priestly absolution, and was consigned to an unhallowed grave. They died the martyrs of sincerity; strong in the faith that a lie must ever be hateful in the sight of God, though infallible popes should exact it, or an infallible Church, as represented by cardinals and confessors, should persuade it.

Unsatiated by the calamities of the nuns, the vengeance of the enemies of Port-Royal was directed against the buildings where they had dwelt, the sacred edifice where they had worshipped, and the tombs in which their dead had been interred. The monastery and the adjacent church were overthrown from their foundations. Workmen, prepared by hard drinking for their task, broke open the graves in which the nuns and recluses of former times had been interred. With obscene ribaldry, and outrages too disgusting to be detailed, they piled up a loathsome heap of bones and corpses, on which the dogs were permitted to feed. What remained was thrown into a pit, prepared for the purpose, near the neighbouring churchyard of St. Lambert. A wooden cross, erected by the villagers, marked the spot; and many a pilgrim resorted to it, to pray for the souls of the departed, and for his own. At length no trace remained of the Fortress of Jansenism to offend the eye of the Jesuits, or to perpetuate the memory of the illustrious dead with whom they had so long contended. The mutilated Gothic arch, the water-mill, and the

dovecot, rising from the banks of the pool, with the decayed towers and the farm-house on the slopes of the valley, are all that now attest that it was once the crowded abode of the wise, the learned, and the good. In that spot, however, may still be seen the winding brook, the verdant hills, and the quiet meadows, nature's indestructible monuments to the devout men and holy women who nurtured there affections which made them lovely in their lives, and hopes which rendered them triumphant in death. Nor in her long roll of martyrs has history to record the names of any who suffered with greater constancy, or in a nobler cause; for their conflict was with the very Church which they most profoundly revered, and their cause was that of devotedness to sincerity and abhorrence of falsehood.

Amongst the interpreters of the counsels of Divine Providence in that age, there were not wanting many who found, in the calamities which overwhelmed the declining years of Louis, the retribution of an avenging Deity for the wrongs inflicted on Port-Royal. If it were given to man to decipher the mysterious characters engraven on the scroll of this world's history, it might not be difficult to find, in the annals of his reign, other and yet more weighty reasons for the awakening of Nemesis in France at the commencement of the eighteenth century. But of the mere chronological fact, there is no doubt. The death of the three Dauphins, and the victories of Eugene and Marlborough, followed hard on the dispersion of the nuns. With his dying breath, Louis cast the responsibility of his conduct towards them on the Jesuits who stood round his bed. 'If, indeed, you have misled and deceived me,' — such was his last address to his confessors — 'you are deeply guilty, for in truth I acted in good faith. I sincerely sought the peace of the Church.'

The humiliation of his spiritual advisers quickly followed. It was preceded by the retirement and death of Madame de Maintenon, who had both provoked and derided the sufferings of the Port-Royalists. The very type of mediocrity out of place, she is to our mind the least attractive of all the ladies of equivocal or desperate reputation, who, in modern times, have stood on the steps of European thrones. Her power was sustained by the feebleness of the mind she had subdued, and by the craftiness of those who had subjugated her own. Her prudery and her religiousness, such as it was, served but to deepen the aversion which her intriguing, selfish, narrow-minded, and bigoted spirit excite and justify; although, in her own view of the matter, she probably hoped to propitiate the favour of heaven and the applause of the world, by directing against the unoffending women of Port-Royal the deadly wrath of the

worn-out debauchee, whose jaded spirits and unquiet conscience it was her daily task to sustain and flatter.

De Noailles, the instrument of her cruelty, lived to bewail his guilt with such strange agonies of remorse, as to rescue his memory from hatred, although it is difficult to contemplate, without some contempt, such a paroxysm of emotions, which, however just in themselves, deprived their victim of all powers of self-control, and of every semblance of decorous composure. His howlings are described by the witness of them, to have been more like those of a wild beast or a maniac, than of a reasonable man.

If these slight notices of the heroes and heroines of Port-Royal (slight, indeed, when compared with the materials from which they have been drawn) should be ascribed by any one to a pen plighted to do suit and service to the cause of Rome, no surmise could be wider of the mark. No Protestant can read the writings of the Port-Royalists themselves, without gratitude for his deliverance from the superstitions of a Church which calls herself Catholic, and boasts that she is eternal. That she will flourish as long as the race of man shall endure, is indeed a conclusion which may reasonably be adopted by him who divines the future only from the past. For where is the land, or what the age, in which a conspicuous place has not been held by phenomena essentially the same, however circumstantially different? In what æra has man not been a worshipper of the visible? In what country has imagination—the sensuous property of the mind—failed to triumph over those mental powers which are purely contemplative? Who can discover a period in which religion has not more or less assumed the form of a compromise—between the self-dependence and the self-distrust of her votaries—between their abasement before a merely human authority and their conviction that no such allegiance is really due—between their awe of the Divine power and their habitual revolt against the Divine will? Of every such compromise, the indications have ever been the same—a worship of pomp and ceremonial—a spiritual despotism exercised by a sacerdotal caste—bodily penances and costly expiations—and the constant intervention of man, and of the works of man, between the worshipper and the supreme object of his worship. So long as human nature shall continue what it is, the religion of human nature will be unchanged. The Church of Rome will be eternal, if man, such as he now is, shall himself be eternal.

But for every labour under the sun, says the Wise Man, there is a time. There is a time for bearing testimony against the errors of Rome: why not also a time for testifying to the sublime virtues



with which those errors have been so often associated? Are we for ever to admit and never to practise the duties of kindness and mutual forbearance? Does Christianity consist in a vivid perception of the faults, and an obtuse blindness to the merits, of those who differ from us? Is charity a virtue only when we ourselves are the objects of it? Is there not a Church as pure and more catholic than those of Oxford or Rome—a Church comprehending within its limits every human being who, according to the measure of the knowledge placed within his reach, strives habitually to be conformed to the will of the common Father of us all? To indulge hope beyond the pale of some narrow communion, has, by each Christian society in its turn, been denounced as a daring presumption. Yet hope has come to all, and with her Faith and Charity, her inseparable companions. Amidst the shock of contending creeds, and the uproar of anathemas, good men have listened to gentler and more kindly sounds. They may have debated as polemics, but they have felt as Christians. On the universal mind of Christendom is indelibly engraven one image, towards which the eyes of every true disciple of Christ are more or less earnestly directed. Whoever has himself caught any resemblance, however faint and imperfect, to that divine and benignant Original, has, in his measure, learnt to recognise a brother in every one in whom he can discern the same resemblance.\*

There is an essential unity in that 'Kingdom which is not of this world.' But within the provinces of that mighty state there is room for endless varieties of administration, and for local laws and customs widely differing from each other. The unity consists in the one object of worship—the one object of affiance—the one source of virtue—the one cementing principle of mutual love, which pervade and animate the whole. The diversities are, and must be, as numerous and intractable as are the essential distinctions which nature, habit, and circumstances have created among men. Uniformity of creeds, of discipline, of ritual, and of ceremonies, in such a world as ours!—a world where no two men are not as distinguishable in their mental as in their physical aspect; where every petty community has its separate system of civil government; where all that meets the eye, and all that arrests the ear, has a stamp of boundless and infinite variety! What are the

\* See on this subject a book entitled 'The Catholic Spirit of Christianity,' the anonymous work of the Rev. E. M'Vicar, now a minister of the Church of Scotland, in Ceylon. Why such a book should not have attained an extensive celebrity, or why such a writer should have been permitted to quit his native land, are questions to which we fear no satisfactory answer could be given by the dispensers of fame or of church preferment.

harmonies of tone, of colour, and of form, but the result of contrasts—of contrasts held in subordination to one all-pervading principle, which reconciles without confounding the component elements of the music, the painting, or the structure? In the physical works of God, beauty could have no existence without endless diversities. Why assume that in religious society—a work not less surely to be ascribed to the supreme Author of all things—this law is absolutely reversed? Were it possible to subdue that innate tendency of the human mind, which compels men to differ in religious opinions and observances, at least as widely as on all other subjects, what would be the results of such a triumph? Where then would be the free comparison, and the continual enlargement of thought; where the self-distrusts which are the springs of humility, or the mutual dependencies which are the bonds of love? He who made us with this infinite variety in our intellectual and physical constitution, must have foreseen, and foreseeing must have intended, a corresponding dissimilarity in the opinions of his creatures on all questions submitted to their judgment, and proposed for their acceptance. For truth is his law; and if all men will profess to think alike, all men must live in the habitual violation of that law.

Zeal for uniformity attests the latent distrusting, not the firm convictions of the zealot. In proportion to the strength of those convictions on our minds, is our indifference to the multiplication of suffrages in favour of our judgment. Our thoughts are steeped in imagery; and where the palpable form is not, the impalpable spirit escapes the notice of the unreflecting multitude. In common hands, analysis stops at the species or the genus, and cannot rise to the order or the class. To distinguish birds from fishes, beasts from insects, limits the efforts of the vulgar observer of the face of animated nature. But Cuvier could trace the sublime unity, the universal type, the fountal Idea, existing in the creative intelligence, which connects as one the mammoth and the snail. So, common observers can distinguish from each other the different varieties of religious society, and can rise no higher. Where one assembly worships with harmonies of music, fumes of incense, ancient liturgies, and a gorgeous ceremonial, and another listens to the unaided voice of a single pastor, they can perceive and record the differences; but the hidden ties which unite them both escape such observation. All appears as contrast, and all ministers to antipathy and discord. It is our belief that these things may be rightly viewed in a different aspect, and yet with the most severe conformity to the Divine will, whether as intimated by natural religion, or as revealed in Holy Scripture. We

believe that, in the judgment of an enlightened charity, many Christian societies, who are accustomed to denounce each other's errors, will at length come to be regarded as members in common of the one great and comprehensive Church, in which diversities of forms are harmonised by an all-pervading unity of spirit. For ourselves at least, we should deeply regret to conclude that we were aliens from that great Christian Commonwealth of which the Nuns and Recluses of the valley of Port-Royal were members, and members assuredly of no common excellence.

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## RICHARD BAXTER.

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THE recent republication of the whole of the voluminous practical works of Richard Baxter, under the superintendence of the late Mr. Orme, may be considered, in legal phrase, as a demand for judgment, in the appeal of the great Nonconformist to the ultimate tribunal of posterity, from the censures of his own age, on himself and his writings. We think that the decision was substantially right, and that, on the whole, it must be affirmed. Right it was, beyond all doubt, in so far as it assigned to him an elevated rank amongst those, who, taking the spiritual improvement of mankind for their province, have found there at once the motive and the reward for labours beneath which, unless sustained by that holy impulse, the utmost powers of our frail nature must have prematurely fainted.

About the time when the high-born guests of Whitehall were celebrating the nuptial revels of Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine, and the visitors of low degree were defraying the cost by the purchase of titles and monopolies, there was living at the pleasant village of Eaton Constantine, between the Wrekin Hill and the Severn, a substantial yeoman, incurious alike about the politics of the empire and the wants of the exchequer. Yet was he not without his vexations. On the green before his door, a Maypole, hung with garlands, allured the retiring congregation to dance out the Sunday afternoon to the sound of fife and tabret; while he, intent on the study of the sacred volume, was greeted with no better names than Puritan, Precisian, and Hypocrite. If he bent his steps to the parish church, venerable as it was, and picturesque, in contempt of all styles and orders of architecture, his case was not much mended. There the aged and purblind incumbent executed his weekly task with the aid of strange associates. One of them had laid aside the flail, and another the thimble, to mount the reading desk. To these succeeded 'the excellentest stage player in all the country, and a good gamester, and a good fellow.' This worthy having received holy orders, forged the like for a neighbour's



son, who, on the strength of that title, officiated in the pulpit and at the altar. Next in this goodly list came an attorney's clerk, who had 'tipped himself into so great poverty,' that he had no other way to live but by assuming the pastoral care of the flock at Eaton Constantine. Time out of mind, the curate, whoever he might chance to be, had been ex-officio the sole professor of secular, as well as of sacred literature in the parish; and to each in turn of these learned persons our yeoman was therefore fain to commit the education of his only son and namesake, Richard Baxter.

Such, from his tenth to his sixteenth year, were the teachers of the most voluminous theological writer in the English language. Of that period of his life, the only incidents which can now be ascertained are, that his love of apples was inordinate, and that, on the subject of robbing orchards, he held, in practice at least, the doctrines handed down amongst schoolboys by an unbroken tradition.

Almost as barren is the only extant record of the three remaining years of his pupilage. They were spent at the endowed school at Wroxeter, which he quitted at the age of nineteen, destitute of all mathematical and physical science—ignorant of Hebrew—a mere smatterer in Greek—and possessed of as much Latin as enabled him in after life to use it with reckless facility. Yet, it was not possible that a mind so prolific, and which yielded such early fruits, should have advanced to manhood without much well-directed culture.

The Bible which lay on his father's table, formed the whole of the good man's library, and would have been ill exchanged for all the treasures of the Vatican. He had been no stranger to the cares, nor indeed to the disorders of life; and, as his strength declined, it was his delight to inculcate on his inquisitive boy the lessons which inspired wisdom teaches most persuasively, when illustrated by dear-bought experience, and enforced by parental love. For the mental infirmities of the son, no better discipline could have been found. A pyrrhonist of nature's making, his threescore years and ten might have been exhausted in a fruitless struggle to adjudicate between antagonist theories, if his mind had not thus been subjugated to the supreme authority of Holy Writ, by an influence coeval with the first dawn of reason, and associated indissolubly with his earliest and most enduring affections. It is neither the wise nor the good by whom the patrimony of opinion is most lightly regarded. Such is the condition of our existence, that, beyond the precincts of abstract science, we must take much for granted, if we would make any advance in knowledge, or live to any useful end. Our hereditary prepossessions

must not only precede our acquired judgments, but must conduct us to them. To begin by questioning everything is to end by answering nothing; and a premature revolt from human authority is but an incipient rebellion against conscience, reason, and truth.

Launched into the ocean of speculative inquiry, without the anchorage of parental instruction and filial reverence, Baxter would have been drawn by his constitutional tendencies into that sceptical philosophy, through the long annals of which no single name is to be found to which the gratitude of mankind has been yielded or is justly due. He had much in common with the most eminent doctors of that school—the animal frame, characterised by sluggish appetites, languid passions, and great nervous energy; the intellectual nature distinguished by subtlety to seize distinctions more than by wit to detect analogies; by the power to dive, instead of the faculty to soar; by skill to analyse subjective truths, rather than by ability to combine them with each other and with objective realities into one symmetrical structure. But what was wanting in his sensitive, and deficient in his intellectual nature, was balanced and corrected by the spiritual elevation of his mind. If not enamoured of the beautiful, nor conversant with the ideal, nor accustomed to grasp at the same time the comprehensive and the abstract, he enjoyed that clear mental vision which attends on moral purity—the rectitude of judgment which rewards the subjection of the will to the reason—the loftiness of thought awakened by habitual communion with the source of light—and the earnest stability of purpose inseparable from the predominance of the social above the selfish affections. Scepticism and devotion were the conflicting elements of his internal life; but the radiance from above gradually dispersed the vapours from beneath, and through half a century of pain, and strife, and agitation, he enjoyed that settled tranquillity which no efforts merely intellectual can attain, nor any speculative doubts destroy,—the peace, of which it is said, that it passes understanding.

Baxter was born in 1615, and consequently attained his early manhood amidst events ominous of approaching revolutions. Deep and latent as are the ultimate causes of the continued existence of Episcopacy in England, nothing can be less recondite than the human agency employed in working out that result. Nursed by the Tudors, adopted by the Stuarts, and wedded in her youth to a powerful aristocracy, the Anglican Church retains the indelible stamp of these early alliances. To the great, the learned, and the worldly wise, it has for three centuries afforded a resting-place and a refuge. But a long interval had elapsed before the national temples and hierarchy were consecrated to the nobler end of

enlightening the ignorant, and of administering comfort to the poor. Rich beyond all Protestant rivalry in sacred literature, the Church of England, from the days of Parker to those of Laud, had scarcely produced any one considerable work of popular instruction. The pastoral care which at a later period Burnet depicted, was till then a vision which, though since nobly fulfilled, no past experience had realised. The alphabet was among the mysteries which the English Church long concealed from her catechumens. There is no parallel in the annals of any other Protestant State, of so wonderful a concentration, and so imperfect a diffusion of learning and genius, of piety and zeal. The reigns of Whitgift, Bancroft, and Laud, were unmolested by cares so rude as those of evangelising the artisans and peasantry. Jewell and Bull, Hall and Donne, Hooker and Taylor, lived and wrote for their peers, and for future ages, but not for the commonalty of their own.

Yet was not Christianity bereft in England of her distinctive and glorious privilege. It was still the religion of the poor. Amidst persecution, contempt, and penury, the Puritans had toiled and suffered, and had, not rarely, died in their service. And thus in every city, and almost in every village, they who had eyes to see, and ears to hear, might, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, perceive the harbingers of the coming tempest. Thoughtful and resolute men had transferred the allegiance of the heart from their legitimate, to their chosen leaders; while, unconscious of their danger, the ruling powers were straining the bonds of authority, in exact proportion to the decrease of their number and their strength. It was when the future pastors of New England were training men to a generous contempt of all sublunary interest for conscience sake, that Laud, not content to be terrible to the founders of Connecticut and Massachusetts, braved an enmity far more to be dreaded than theirs. His truth and courage were far less appropriate to the ends to which his life was devoted, than would have been the wily and time-serving genius of Williams. Supported by Heyling, Cosins, Montague, and many others, who adopted or exaggerated his own opinions, he precipitated, by a dull and uncompromising bigotry, the overthrow of a Church, in harmony with the character of the people, strong in their affections, upheld by a long line of illustrious names, connected with the whole aristocracy of the realm, and enthusiastically defended by the sovereign.

Baxter's theological studies were commenced during these tumults, and were insensibly biassed by them. The 'Ecclesiastical Polity' had reconciled him to episcopal ordination: but as he read, and listened, and observed further, his attachment to

the established ritual and discipline progressively declined. He began by rejecting the practice of indiscriminate communion. He was dissatisfied with the compulsory subscription to articles, and the baptismal cross. 'Deeper thoughts on the point of Episcopacy' were suggested to him by the *et cetera* oath; and these reflections soon rendered him an irreconcilable adversary to the 'English Diocesan frame.' He distributed the sacred elements to those who would not kneel to receive them, and religiously abjured the surplice. Thus ripe for spiritual censures, and prepared to endure them, he was rescued from the danger he had braved by the demon of civil strife. The Scots in the north, and the Parliament in the south, summoned Charles and Laud to more serious cares than those of enforcing conformity, and left Baxter free to enlarge and to propagate his discoveries.

With liberty of speech and action, his mind was visited by a corresponding audacity of thought. Was there indeed a future life?—Was the soul of man immortal?—Were the Scriptures true? Such were the questions which now assaulted and perplexed him. They came not as vexing and importunate suggestions, but 'under pretence of sober reason,' and all the resources of his understanding were summoned to resist the tempter. Self-deception was abhorrent from his nature. He feared the face of no speculative difficulty. Dark as were the shapes which crossed his path, they must be closely questioned; and gloomy as was the abyss to which they led, it was to be unhesitatingly explored. The result needs not to be stated. From a long and painful conflict he emerged victorious, but not without bearing to the grave some scars to mark the severity of the struggle. No man was ever blessed with more profound convictions; but so vast and elaborate was the basis of argumentation on which they rested, that to re-examine the texture, and ascertain the coherence of the materials of which it was wrought, formed the still recurring labour of his whole future life.

While the recluses of the world are engulfed in the vortices of metaphysics, the victims of passion are still urged forward in their wild career of guilt and misery. From the transcendental labyrinths through which Baxter was winding his solitary and painful way, the war recalled him to the stern realities of life. In the immediate vicinity of the earlier military operations, Coventry had become a city of refuge to him, and to a large body of his clerical brethren. They believed, in the simplicity of their hearts, that Essex, Waller, and Cromwell, were fighting the battles of Charles, and that their real object was to rescue the King from the thralldom of the malignants, and the Church from the tyranny of the prelatists. 'We kept,' says Baxter, speaking of himself and his associates, 'to our old principles, and thought all others had



done so too, except a very few inconsiderable persons. We were unfeignedly for King and Parliament. We believed that the war was only to save the Parliament and kingdom from the Papists and delinquents, and to remove the dividers, that the King might again return to his Parliament, and that no changes might be made in religion, but by the laws which had his free consent. We took the true happiness of King and people, Church and State, to be our end, and so we understood the covenant, engaging both against Papists and schismatics; and when the Court News-Book told the world of the swarms of Anabaptists in our armies, we thought it had been a mere lie, because it was not so with us.'

Ontology and scholastic divinity have their charms; and never did man confess them more than Richard Baxter. But the pulse must beat languidly indeed, when the superior fascination of the 'tented field' is not acknowledged; nor should it derogate from the reverence which attends his name, to admit that he felt and indulged this universal excitement. Slipping away from Durandus, Bradwardine, Suarez, and Ariminensis, he visited Edgehill and Naseby while the Parliamentary armies still occupied the ground on which they had fought. He found the conquerors armed *cap-à-pie* for spiritual, as well as carnal combats; and to convert the troops from their theological errors, was the duty which, he was assured, had been committed to him by Providence. Becoming accordingly chaplain to Whalley's regiment, he witnessed in that capacity many a skirmish, and was present at the sieges of Bristol, Sherborne, and Worcester. Rupert and Goring proved less stubborn antagonists than the seekers and levellers of the Lieutenant-General's camp; and Baxter was 'still employed in preaching, conferring, and disputing against their confounding errors.' The soldiers discoursed as earnestly, and even published pamphlets as copiously as himself. After many an affair of posts, the hostile parties at length engaged in a pitched battle at Amersham in Buckinghamshire. 'When the public talking-day came,' says Baxter, 'I took the reading pew, and Pitchford's cornet and troopers took the gallery. There did the leader of the Chesham men begin, and afterwards Pitchford's soldiers set in; and I alone disputed against them from morning until almost night.' Too old a campaigner to retire from the field in the presence of his enemy, 'he staid it out till they first rose and went away.' The honours of the day were, however, disputed. In the strange book published by Edwards, under the appropriate title of 'Gangræna,' the fortunes of the field were chronicled; and there, as we are informed by Baxter himself, may be read 'the abundance of nonsense uttered on the occasion.'

Cromwell regarded these polemics with ill-disguised aversion, and probably with secret contempt. He had given Baxter but a cold welcome to the army. 'He would not dispute with me at all,' is a fact related by the good man with evident surprise; 'but he would in good discourse very fluently pour out himself in the extolling of free grace, which was savoury to those that had right principles, though he had some misunderstanding of free grace himself. He was a man of excellent natural parts for affection and oratory, but not well seen in the principles of his religion; of a sanguine complexion, naturally of such a vivacity, hilarity, and alacrity as another man hath when he hath drunken a cup too much; but naturally, also, so far from humble thoughts of himself, that it was his ruin.' The Protector had surrendered his powerful mind to the religious fashions of his times, and never found the leisure or the inclination for deep inquiry into a subject on which it was enough for his purposes to excel in fluent and savoury discourse. Among those purposes, to obtain the approbation of his own conscience was not the least sincere. His devotion was ardent, and his piety genuine. But the alliance between habits of criminal self-indulgence, and a certain kind of theopathy, is but too ordinary a phenomenon. That at each step of his progress, Cromwell should have been deceived and sustained by some plausible sophistry, is the less wonderful, since even now, in retracing his course, it is difficult to ascertain the point at which he first quitted the straight path of duty, or to discover what escape was at length open to him from the web in which he had become involved. There have been many worse, and few greater men. Yet to vindicate his name from the condemnation which rests upon it, would be to confound the distinctions of good and evil as he did, without the apology of being tempted as he was.

Baxter was too profound a moralist to be dazzled by the triumph of bad men, however specious their virtues; or to affect any complacency towards a bad cause, though indebted to it for the only period of serenity which it ever was his lot to enjoy. He had ministered to the forces of the Parliamentary general, but abhorred the regicide and usurper. In his zeal for the ancient constitution, he had meditated a scheme for detaching his own regiment, and ultimately all the generals of the army, from their leader. They were first to be undermined by a course of logic, and then blown up by the eloquence of the preacher. This profound device in the science of theological engineering would have been counterworked by the Lieutenant-General, had he detected it, by methods somewhat less subtle, but certainly not

less effective. A fortunate illness defeated the formidable conspiracy, and restored the projector to his pastoral duties and to peace. Even then, his voice was publicly raised against 'the treason, rebellion, perfidiousness, and hypocrisy' of Cromwell, who probably never heard, and certainly never heeded, the denunciations of his former chaplain.

Baxter enjoyed the esteem which he would not repay. He was once invited by the Protector to preach at court. Sermons in those days were very serious things—point-blank shots at the bosoms of the auditory; and Cromwell was not a man to escape or to fear the heaviest pulpit ordnance which could be brought to bear on him. From the many vulnerable points of attack, the preacher selected the crying sin of encouraging sectaries. Not satisfied with the errors of his own days, the great Captain had anticipated those of a later age, and had asserted in their utmost extent the dangerous principles of religious liberty. This latitudinarian doctrine may have been suggested by motives merely selfish; and Baxter, at least, could acknowledge no deeper wisdom in which such an innovation could have had its birth. St. Paul was, therefore, made to testify 'against the sin committed by politicians, in maintaining divisions for their own ends, that they might fish in troubled waters.' He who now occupied the throne of the Stuarts claimed one prerogative to which even those monarchs had never aspired. It was that of controverting the argumentation of the pulpit. His zeal for the conversion of his monitor appears to have been exceedingly ardent. Having summoned him to his presence, 'he began by a long tedious speech to me' (the narrative is Baxter's) 'of God's providence in the change of the government, and how God had owned it, and what great things had been done at home and abroad, in the peace with Spain and Holland, &c. When he had wearied us all with speaking thus slowly for about an hour, I told him it was too great a condescension to acquaint me so fully with all these matters which were above me; but I told him that we took our ancient monarchy to be a blessing, and not an evil, to the land; and humbly craved his patience that I might ask him how England had ever forfeited that blessing, and unto whom that forfeiture was made. Upon that question he was awakened into some passion, and then told me that it was no forfeiture, but God had changed it as pleased him; and then he let fly at the Parliament which thwarted him, and especially by name at four or five of those members who were my chief acquaintances, whom I presumed to defend against his passion, and thus four or five hours were spent.'

During this singular dialogue, Lambert fell asleep, an indecorum

which, in the court of an hereditary monarch, would have been fatal to the prospects of the transgressor. But the drowsiness of his old comrade was more tolerable to Cromwell than the pertinacity of his former chaplain, against whom he a second time directed the artillery of his logic. On this occasion almost all the Privy Council were present; liberty of conscience being the thesis, Baxter the respondent, and Cromwell assuming to himself the double office of opponent and moderator. ‘After another slow, tedious speech of his, I told him,’ says the autobiographer, ‘a little of my judgment, and when two of his company had spun out a great deal more of the time in such like tedious, but more ignorant speeches, I told him, that if he would be at the labour to read it, I could tell him more of my mind in writing two sheets than in that way of speaking many days. He received the paper afterwards, but I scarcely believe that he ever read it. I saw that what he learnt must be from himself, being more disposed to speak many hours than hear one, and little heeding what another said when he had spoken himself.’

Whatever may have been the faults, or whatever the motives of the Protector, there can be no doubt that under his sway England witnessed a diffusion, till then unknown, of the purest influence of genuine religious principles. The popular historians of that period, from various motives, have disguised or misrepresented the fact; and they who derive their views on this subject from Clarendon, from Hume, or from Hudibras, mistake a caricature for a genuine portrait. To this result, no single man contributed more largely than Baxter himself, by his writings and his pastoral labours. His residence at Kidderminster during the whole of the Protectorate was the sabbath of his life; the interval in which his mind enjoyed the only repose of which it was capable, in labours of love, prompted by a willing heart, and unimpeded by a contentious world.

Good Protestants hold, that the Supreme Head of the Church reserves to himself alone to mediate and to reign, as his incommunicable attributes; and that to teach and to minister are the only offices he has delegated to the pastors of his flock. Wisdom to scale the heights of contemplation, love to explore the depths of wretchedness—a science and a servitude inseparably combined;—the one investigating the relations between man and his Creator, the other busied in the cares of a self-denying philanthropy—such, at least in theory, are the endowments of that sacred institution, which, first established by the fishermen of Galilee, has been ever since maintained throughout the Christian commonwealth. A priesthood, of which all the members shall be animated with this spirit, may be expected when angels shall resume their visits to our



earth, and not till then. Human agency, even when employed to distribute the best gifts of Providence to man, must still bear the impress of human guilt and frailty. But if there be one object in this fallen world, to which the eye, jaded by its pageantries and its gloom, continually turns with renovated hope, it is to an alliance, such as that which bound together Richard Baxter and the people among whom he dwelt. He, a poor man, rich in mental resources, consecrating alike his poverty and his wealth to their service; ever present to guide, to soothe, to encourage, and, when necessary, to rebuke; shrinking from no aspect of misery, however repulsive, nor from the most loathsome forms of guilt which he might hope to reclaim;—the instructor, at once, and the physician, the almoner and the friend, of his congregation. They, repaying his labours of love with untutored reverence; awed by his reproofs, and rejoicing in his smile; taught by him to discharge the most abject duties, and to endure the most pressing evils of life, as a daily tribute to their Divine benefactor; incurious of the novelties of their controversial age, but meekly thronging the altar from which he dispensed the symbols of their mystical union with each other and their common Head; and, at the close of their obscure, monotonous, but tranquil course, listening to the same parental voice, then subdued to the gentlest tones of sympathy, and telling of bright hopes and of a glorious reward.

Little was there in common between Kidderminster and the 'sweet smiling' Auburn. Still less alike were the 'village preacher,' who 'ran his godly race,' after the fancy of Oliver Goldsmith, and the 'painful preacher,' whose emaciated form, gaunt visage, and Geneva bands, attested the severity of his studies, and testified against prelatic ascendancy. Deeper yet the contrast between the delicate hues and fine touches of the portrait drawn from airy imagination, and Baxter's catalogue of his weekly catechisings, fasts, and conferences: of his Wednesday meetings and Thursday disputations; and of the thirty helps by which he was enabled to quicken into spiritual life the inert mass of a rude and vicious population. But, truth against fiction, all the world over, in the rivalry for genuine pathos and real sublimity! Though ever new and charming, after ten thousand repetitions, the plaintive, playful, melodious poetry of the 'Deserted Village' bears to the homely tale of the curate of Kidderminster a resemblance like that of the tapestried lists of a tournament to the well-fought field of Roncesvalles. Too prolix for quotation, and perhaps too sacred for our immediate purpose, it records one of those moral conquests which attest the existence in the human heart of faculties which, even when most oppressed by ignorance, or benumbed by guilt,

may yet be roused to their noblest exercise, and disciplined for their ultimate perfection.

Eventful tidings disturbed these apostolical labours, and but too soon proved how precarious was the tenure of that religious liberty which Baxter at once enjoyed and condemned. With the Protectorate it commenced and ended. The death of Oliver, the abdication of Richard, the revival of the Long Parliament, the reappearance of the ejected members, the assembling of a new House of Commons under the auspices of Monk, and the restoration of the Stuarts, progressively endangered, and at length subverted the edifice of ecclesiastical freedom, which the same strong hand had founded and sustained.

Yet the issue for a while seemed doubtful. The sectarians overrated their own strength, and the Episcopalians exaggerated their own weakness. Infallible and impeccable, the Church of Rome is a Tadmor in the wilderness, miraculously erect and beautiful in the midst of an otherwise universal ruin. The Church of England—liable to err, but always judging right, capable of misconduct, but never acting wrong—is a still more stupendous exception to the weakness and depravity which in all other human institutions signalise our common nature. But for this well-established truth, a hardy scepticism might have ventured to arraign her as an habitual alarmist. If she is ‘in danger’ at this moment, she has been so from her cradle. Puritans and Presbyterians, Arminians and Calvinists, Independents and Methodists, had for three centuries threatened her existence, when at last the matricidal hands of the metropolitan of all England, and of the prelate of England’s metropolis, were in our own days irreverently laid on her prebendal stalls. One ‘whose bosom’s lord sits lightly on his throne,’ in the presence of all other forms of peril, has on this last fearful omen lost his accustomed fortitude\*; though even the impending overthrow of the church he adorns, finds his wit as brilliant, and his gaiety as indestructible as of yore. What wonder, then, if the canons expectant of St. Paul’s at the Court of Breda, could not survey, even from that Pisgah, the fair land of promise lying before them, without many faint misgivings that the sons of Anak, who occupied the strongholds, would continue to enjoy the milk and honey of their Palestine? Thousands of intrusive incumbents, on whose heads no episcopal hand had ever been laid, and whose purity no surplice had ever symbolised, possessed the parsonages and the pulpits of either episcopal province. A population had grown up unbaptized with the sign of the cross, and instructed to repeat the longer and

\* See the Letters of the Rev. Sydney Smith to Archdeacon Singleton.

shorter catechisms of the Westminster Divines. Thirty thousand armed Covenanters yielded to Monk and his officers a dubious submission. Cudworth and Lightfoot at Cambridge, Wilkins and Wallis at Oxford, occupied and adorned the chairs of the ejected loyalists. The divine right of Episcopacy might yet be controverted by Baxter, Howe, and Owen; and Sinecymnus might awaken from his repose in the persons of Marshall, Calamy, and Spurstow. Little marvel then, that their eternal charter inspired a less exulting faith than of old in the Bishops who had assembled at Breda; that Hyde and Southampton temporised; or that Charles, impatient of the Protestant heresy in all its forms, and of Christianity itself in all its precepts, lent his royal name to an experiment of which deceit was the basis, and persecution the result.

Liberty of conscience, and a concurrence in any Act of Parliament which, on mature deliberation, should be offered for securing it, were solemnly promised by the King, while yet uncertain of the temper of the Commons he was about to meet. Ten Presbyterian ministers were added to the list of royal chaplains; and, for once a martyr to the public good, Charles submitted himself to the penalty of assisting at four of their sermons. That with which Baxter greeted him, could not have been recited by the most rapid voice in less than two hours. It is a solemn contrast of the sensual and the spiritual life, without one courtly phrase to relieve his censure of the vices of the great. More soothing sounds were daily falling on the royal ear. The surplice and the Book of Common Prayer had reappeared at the worship of the Lords and Commons. Heads and fellows of colleges enjoyed a restoration scarcely less triumphant than that of their sovereign. Long dormant statutes, arising from their slumbers, menaced the Nonconformists; and the truth was revealed to the delighted hierarchy, that the Church of England was still enthroned in the affections of the English people — the very type of their national character — the reflection of their calm good sense — of their reverence for hoar authority — of their fastidious distaste for whatever is scenic, impassioned, and self-assuming — of their deliberate preference for solid sense, even when oppressively dull, to mere rhetoric, however animated — and of their love for those grave observances and ancient forms which conduct the mind to self-communion, and lay open to the heart its long accumulated treasure of hidden, though profound, emotions. Happy if the confidence in her own strength excited by this discovery, had been blended either with the forgiveness and the love which the gospel teaches; or with the toleration inculcated by human philosophy; or with the prudence which should be derived from a long course of suffering! Twenty-eight

disgraceful years had then been blotted from the annals of the Anglican Church, and perhaps from the secular history of England.

The time was yet unripe for avowed retaliation, but wrongs and indignities such as those which the Episcopalians had suffered, were neither to be pardoned nor unavenged. Invited by the King to prepare a scheme of future church government, Baxter and his friends, taking Usher's 'Reduction of Episcopacy' as their basis, presented to Charles and the prelates a scheme of ecclesiastical reform. 'As to Archbishop Usher's model of government,' replied the bishops, 'we decline it as not consistent with his other learned discourses on the original of Episcopacy and of metropolitans, nor with the King's supremacy in causes ecclesiastical.' 'Had you read Gerson, Bucer, Parker, Baynes, Salmasius, Blondel, &c.,' rejoined Baxter, 'you would have seen just reason given for our dissent from the ecclesiastical hierarchy as established in England. You would easily grant that dioceses are too great, if you had ever conscionably tried the task which Dr. Hammond describeth as the bishop's work, or had ever believed Ignatius' and others' ancient descriptions of a bishop's church.'

To what issue this war of words was tending, no bystander could doubt. To maintain the splendour and the powers of Episcopacy, to yield nothing, and yet to avoid the appearance of a direct breach of the royal word, was so glaringly the object of the Court, that wilful blindness only could fail to penetrate the transparent veil of 'The Declaration' framed by Clarendon with all the astuteness of his profession, and accepted by the Presbyterians with the eagerness of expiring hope. Baxter was not so deceived. In common with the other heads of his party, he judged the faith of Charles an inadequate security, and refused the proffered mitre of Hereford as an insidious bribe.

There were abundant reasons for this distrust. Thanks for his gracious purposes in favour of the Nonconformists had been presented to the Head of the Church by the House of Commons, who immediately afterwards, at the instance of his Majesty's Secretary of State, rejected the very measure which had kindled their gratitude. Three months had scarcely passed since the declaration had issued, when an Order in Council proclaimed the illegality of all religious meetings held without the walls of the parochial churches. The Book of Common Prayer and the Statute Book were daily cementing their alliance; the one enlarged by a supplication for 'grace carefully and studiously to imitate the example of the blessed saint and martyr' who had now attained the honours of canonization; the other requiring the officers of all corporate and



port towns 'to take the sacrament of the Lord's supper;' and to swear 'that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take arms against the king,' or against 'those commissioned by him.'

Amidst these parliamentary thunders were opened the conferences of the Savoy, which were to reduce to a definite meaning the declarations of Breda and of Whitehall. It was the scene of Baxter's triumph and defeat—the triumph of his promptitude, subtlety, and boundless resources—the defeat of the last hope he was permitted to indulge, of peace to himself or to the Church of which he was then the brightest ornament. The tactics of popular assemblies form a system of licensed deceit; and their conventional morality tolerates the avowal of the skill by which the antagonist party has been overreached, and even an open exultation in the success of such contrivances. To embarrass the Presbyterians by the course of the discussion, to invent plausible pretexts for delays, and to guide the controversy to an impotent, if not a ludicrous close, were the scarcely concealed objects of the Episcopalians. Opposed to these by the feebler party were the contrivances by which weakness usually seeks to evade the difficulties it cannot stem, and the captiousness which few can restrain when overborne by the superior force of numbers or of authority.

Who ever has seen a parliament, may easily imagine a Synod. Baxter was the leader of an unpopular opposition,—the Charles Fox of the Savoy, of which Morley was the William Pitt, and Gunning the Henry Dundas. To review the Book of Common Prayer, and 'to advise and consult upon the same, and the several objections and exceptions which shall be raised against the same,' was the task assigned by Charles to twelve bishops, nine doctors of divinity, and twenty-one Presbyterian divines. Exalted by the acclamation of the whole Episcopalian party to the head of all human writings, not without some doubts whether it should not rather class with those of the sacred canon, the Book of Common Prayer was pronounced by the bishops, at the opening of the conferences, to be exempt from any errors which they could detect, and incapable of any improvements which they could suggest. They could not therefore advance to the encounter until their antagonists should have unrolled the long catalogue of their hostile criticisms and projected amendments.

From such a challenge it was not in Baxter's nature to shrink, though warned by his associates of the motives by which it was dictated, and of the dangers to which it would lead. 'Bishop Sheldon,' says Burnet, 'saw well enough what the effect would be of obliging them to make all their demands at once, that the number would raise a mighty outcry against them as a people

that could never be satisfied.' In fourteen days Baxter had prepared a new liturgy. In a few more he had completed his objections to the former rubric, with an humble petition for peace and indulgence. Fast and thick flew over the field the missiles of theological theses before the closer conflict of oral debate. This was waged in high dialectic latitudes. Take the following example:—'That command' (we quote the Episcopalian *proponitur*) 'which enjoins only an act in itself lawful, and no other act whereby an unjust penalty is enjoined, or any circumstance whence directly or *per accidens* any sin is consequent, which the commander ought to provide against, hath in it all things requisite to the lawfulness of a command, and particularly cannot be charged with enjoining an act *per accidens* unlawful, nor of commanding an act under an unjust penalty.' As an Indian listens to the war-cry of a hostile tribe, Baxter heard the announcement of this heretical doctrine, and plunged headlong into the fight. Pouring forth his boundless stores of metaphysical, moral, and scholastic speculation, he alternately plunged and soared beyond the reach of ordinary vision—distinguished and qualified, quoted and subtilised, till his voice was drowned 'in noise and confusion, and high reflections on his dark and cloudy imagination.' Bishop Sanderson, the Moderator, adjudged the palm of victory to his opponent. 'Baxter and Gunning' (the words are Burnet's) 'spent several days in logical arguing, to the diversion of the town, who looked upon them as a couple of fencers, engaged in a dispute that could not be brought to any end.' It had, however, reached the only end which the King and his advisers had ever contemplated. An apology had been made for the breach of the royal promise. Henceforth the Presbyterians might be denounced as men whom reason could not convince, and who were therefore justly given up to the coercion of penal laws. To cast on them a still deeper shade of contumacy, some few trifling changes were made in the Rubric by the Convocation. The Church was required to celebrate the martyrdom of the first Charles, and the restoration of the second,—that 'most religious and gracious King' (the last an epithet with which in the same sentence the monarch was complimented and the Deity invoked); and, as if still more certainly to exclude from her pale those who had sued in vain for entrance, Bel and the Dragon, and other worthies of the Apocrypha, were now called to take their stations in her weekly services.

Had Charles been permitted to follow the dictates of his own easy nature, or of his religious predilections, he would (though for precisely opposite reasons) have emulated the zeal of Cromwell for liberty of conscience. He would gladly have secured that freedom

to his Roman Catholic subjects; and would still more gladly have relieved himself from the trouble of persecuting the Protestant Dissenters. But the time was still unripe for such hazardous experiments. At the dictation of Clarendon, he was made to assure his Parliament that he was 'as much in love with the Book of Common Prayer as they could wish, and had prejudices enough against those who did not love it.' Within two years from his return, the depth and sincerity of this affection were attested by the imprisonment of more than four thousand Quakers, and by the promulgation of the Act of Uniformity. Among the two thousand clergymen whom this law excluded from the Church, Baxter was on every account the most conspicuous. He had refused the bishopric of Hereford, and the united interest of Charles and Clarendon had been exerted in vain (so with most elaborate hypocrisy it was pretended) to recover for him a curacy at Kidderminster. He for ever quitted that scene of his apostolic labours; and, in the forty-seventh year of his age, bowed down with bodily infirmities, was driven from his home and his weeping congregation, to pass the remainder of his life in loathsome jails or precarious hiding-places; there to achieve, in penury and almost ceaseless pain, works without a parallel in the history of English theological literature, for their extent, or their prodigality of intellectual wealth.

Solitude was not amongst the aggravations of his lot. Margaret Charlton was a lady of gentle birth, rich in the gifts of nature and of fortune. She dwelt in her mother's house at Kidderminster, where both parent and child found in Baxter their teacher and spiritual guide. 'In her youth, pride and romances, and company suitable thereto, did take her up.' But sickness came, and he ministered to her anxieties; and health returned, and he led the thanksgiving of the congregation; and there were mental conflicts in which he sustained her, and works of mercy in which he directed her, and notes were made of his sermons, and passages were transcribed from his consolatory letters, and gradually— but who needs to be told the result?

Margaret was no ordinary woman. Her 'strangely vivid wit' is celebrated by the admirable John Howe; and her widowed husband, in 'The breviary of her life,' has drawn a portrait the original of which it would have been criminal not to love. Timid, gentle, and reserved, and nursed amidst all the luxuries of her age, her heart was the abode of affections so intense, and of fortitude so enduring, that her meek spirit, impatient of one selfish wish, progressively acquired all the heroism of benevolence, and seemed at length incapable of one selfish fear. In prison, in sickness, in evil report, in every form of danger and fatigue, she was still with un-

abated cheerfulness at the side of him to whom she had pledged her conjugal faith ;—prompting him to the discharge of every duty, calming the asperities of his temper, his associate in unnumbered acts of philanthropy, embellishing his humble home by the little arts with which a cultivated mind imparts its own gracefulness to the meanest dwelling-place ; and during the nineteen years of their union joining with him in one unbroken strain of filial affiance to the Divine mercy, and of a grateful adoration for the Divine goodness. Her tastes and habits had been moulded into a perfect conformity to his. He celebrates her Catholic charity to the opponents of their religious opinions, and her inflexible adherence to her own ; her high esteem of the active and passive virtues of the Christian life, as contrasted with a barren orthodoxy ; her noble disinterestedness, her skill in casuistry, her love of music, and her medicinal arts.

Peace be to the verses which he poured out not to extol but to animate her devotion. If Margaret was wooed in strains over which Sacharissa would have slumbered, Baxter's uncouth rhymes have a charm which Waller's lyrics cannot boast—the charm of purity, and reverence, and truth. The Eloise of Abelard and the Eloise of Rousseau, revealing but too accurately one of the dark chambers of the human heart, have poisoned the imagination, and rendered it difficult to conceive of such ties as those which first drew together the souls of the Nonconformist minister and his pupil ;—he approaching his fiftieth and she scarcely past her twentieth year ; he stricken with penury, disease, and persecution, and she in the enjoyment of affluence and of the world's alluring smiles. It was not in the reign of Charles II. that wit or will were wanting to ridicule or to upbraid such espousals. Grave men sighed over the weakness of the venerable divine ; and gay men disported themselves with so effective an incident in the tragi-comedy of life. Much had the great moralist written upon the benefits of clerical celibacy, but, 'when he said so, he thought that he should die a bachelor.' Something he wrote as follows, in defence of his altered opinions :—'The unsuitableness of our age, and my former known purposes against marriage and against the conveniency of ministers' marriage, who have no sort of necessity, made our marriage the matter of much talk ;' but he most judiciously proceeds, 'the true opening of her case and mine, and the many strange occurrences which brought it to pass, would take away the wonder of her friends and mine that knew us, and the notice of it would much conduce to the understanding of some other passages of our lives. Yet wise friends, by whom I am advised, think it better to omit such personal particularities at this time. Both in her case and in mine



there was much extraordinary, which it doth not much concern the world to be acquainted with.'

Under this apology, is veiled the fact that Margaret herself first felt, or first betrayed the truth, that a sublunary affection had blended itself with their devotional feelings; and that she encouraged him to claim that place in her heart which in the holiest of human beings will still remain accessible to a merely human sympathy. It was an attachment hallowed on either side by all that can give dignity to the passions to which all are alike subject. To her it afforded the daily delight of supporting in his gigantic labours, and of soothing in his unremitted cares, a husband who repaid her tenderness with unceasing love and gratitude. To him it gave a friend whose presence was tranquillity, who tempered by her milder wisdom, and graced by her superior elegance, and exalted by her more confiding piety, whatever was austere, or rude, or distrustful in his rugged character. After all, it must be confessed that the story will not fall handsomely into any niche in the chronicles of romance; though, even in that light, Crabbe or Marмонтel would have made something of it. Yet, unsupported by any powers of narrative, it is a tale which will never want its interest, so long as delight shall be felt in contemplating the submission of the sternest and most powerful minds to that kindly influence which cements and blesses, and which should ennoble human society.

Over the declining years of Baxter's life, friendship, as well as conjugal love, threw a glow of consolation which no man ever needed or ever valued more. His affectionate record of his associates has rescued some of their names from oblivion. Such is the case with 'good old Simon Ash, who went seasonably to heaven at the very time he was to be cast out of the church; who, having a good estate, and a very good wife, inclined to entertainments and liberality, kept a house much frequented by ministers, where, always cheerful, without profuse laughter or levity, and never troubled with doubtings,' he imparted to others the gaiety of his own heart, and died as he had lived, 'in great consolation and cheerful exercise of faith, molested with no fears or doubts, exceedingly glad of the company of his friends, and greatly encouraging all about him.' Such also was 'good Mr. James Walton, commonly called the weeping prophet; of a most holy blameless life, and, though learned, greatly averse to controversy and dispute;' a man who had struggled successfully against constitutional melancholy, until, 'troubled with the sad case of the Church and the multitude of ministers cast out, and at his own unserviceableness, he consumed to death.'

To the Democritus and the Heraclitus of nonconformity, a far greater name succeeds in the catalogue of Baxter's friends. In the village of Acton, Sir Matthew Hale had found an occasional retreat from the cares of his judicial life; and devoted his leisure to science and theology, and to social intercourse with the ejected Nonconformist. In an age of civil strife, he had proposed to himself the example of Atticus, and like that accomplished person, endeavoured to avert the enmity of the contending parties by the fearless discharge of his duties to all, without ministering to the selfish ends of any. The frugal simplicity of his habits, his unaffected piety and studious pursuits, enabled him to keep this hazardous path with general esteem, though he was more indebted for safety to his unrivalled eminence as a lawyer and a judge. Though Cromwell and Ludlow revolted against the Papal authority of Westminster Hall, their age lagged far behind them. In the overthrow of all other institutions, the courts in which Fortescue and Coke had explained or invented the immemorial customs of England, were still the objects of universal veneration; and the supremacy of the law secured to its sages the homage of the people. Never was it rendered more justly than to Hale. With the exception of Roger North we remember no historian of that day who does not bear an unqualified testimony to his uprightness, to the surpassing compass of his professional learning, and the exquisite skill with which it was employed. That agreeable, though most prejudiced writer, refuses him not only this, but the still higher praise of spotless patriotism, and ridicules his pretensions as a philosopher and divine. Baxter, an incomparably better judge, thought far otherwise. In the learning in which he himself excelled all others, he assigned a high station to Hale; and has recorded that his 'conference, mostly about the immortality of the soul and other philosophical and foundation points, was so edifying, that his very questions and objections did help me to more light than other men's solutions.' Differing on those subjects which then agitated society, their minds, enlarged by nobler contemplations, rose far above the controversies of their age; and were united in efforts for their mutual improvement, and for advancing the interests of religion, truth, and virtue. It was a grave and severe, but an affectionate friendship; such as can subsist only between men who have lived in the habitual restraint of their lower faculties, and in the strenuous culture of those powers which they believe to be destined hereafter, and to be ripening now, for an indefinite expansion and an immortal existence.

From such intercourse Baxter was rudely called away. Not satisfied with the rigid uniformity of professed belief and external

observances amongst the clergy of the Established Church, Parliament had denounced a scale of penalties, graduated from fine to banishment to the plantations, against laics who should attend any other form of religious worship, even in private houses, where more than five strangers should be present. At Acton, a personage of no mean importance watched over the ecclesiastical discipline of the parish. ‘Dr. Ryves, rector of that church and of Hadley, dean of Windsor and of Wolverhampton, and chaplain in ordinary to the King,’ could not patiently endure the irregularities of his learned neighbour. The Dean indeed officiated by deputy, and his curate was a raw and ignorant youth; and Baxter (an occasional conformist) was a regular attendant on all the sacred offices. But he refused the Oxford oath, and at his domestic worship there were sometimes found more than the statutable addition to the family circle. Such offences demanded expiation. He was committed to Clerkenwell gaol; and when at length discharged from it, was compelled to seek a new and more hospitable residence. He had his revenge. It was to obtain, through the influence of one of his most zealous disciples, the charter which incorporates the *original* Society for the Propagation of the Gospel\* — a return of good for evil for which his name might well displace those of some of the saints in the calendar.

While the plague was depopulating London, and the silenced clergymen were discharging the unenvied office of watching over the multitude appointed to death, the King and Clarendon, at a secure distance from the contagion, were employed in framing the statute which denounced the most rigid punishment against any nonconformist minister who should approach within five miles of any town in England, or of any parish in which he had formerly officiated. Totteridge, a hamlet, round which a circle of ten miles diameter could be drawn without including any of the residences thus prescribed to Baxter, became his next abode, but was not permitted to be a place of security or rest. His indefatigable pen had produced a paraphrase on the New Testament, where the keen scrutiny of his enemies detected libels, to be refuted only by the logic of the court and prison of the King’s Bench. From the records of that court, Mr. Orme, the editor of Baxter’s works, has extracted the indictment, which sets forth that ‘Richardus Baxter,

\* The society which now bears that name is an institution of later date, founded on the model of that for the establishment of which Baxter laboured, and designed to supersede it; just as the “National School Society” followed on the “British and Foreign School Society,” or King’s College, London, on the London University.

persona seditiosa et factiosa, pravæ mentis, impiæ, inquietæ, turbulent' disposition' et conversation';' — 'falso, illicite, injuste, nequit', factiose, seditiose, et irreligiose, fecit, composuit, scripsit quendam falsum, seditiosum, libellosum, factiosum, et irreligiosum librum.' The classical pleader proceeds in a vein of unconscious humour to justify these hard words by the use of the figure called, we believe, a '*scilicet*' by those who now inhabit the ancient abode of the Knights Templars. 'It is folly,' says the paraphrase, 'to doubt whether there be devils, while devils incarnate dwell amongst us here' (clericos pred' hujus regni Angl' innuendo). 'What else but devils could make ceremonious hypocrites' (clericos pred' innuendo)? 'men that preach in Christ's name,' (seipsum R. B. et al' seditiosas et factiosas person' innuendo), 'therefore, are not to be silenced if they do more harm than good. Dreadful then is the case of men' (episcopos et ministros justitiæ infr' hujus regni Angl' innuendo) 'that silence Christ's faithful ministers' (seipsum R. B. et al' seditiosas et factiosas person' innuendo).

Anstey and George Stevens were dull fellows compared with the great originals from which they drew. L'Estrange himself might have taken a lesson in the art of defamation, from this innuendoing special pleader. But the absurdity was crowned by the conduct of the trial. There were passages in the judicial career of Jeffries in which abhorrence, disgust, indignation, and all other feelings of the sterner kind, gave way to the irresistible sense of the ludicrous; and, 'to be grave exceeds all powers of face,' even when reading the narrative of this proceeding, which was drawn up by one of the spectators. The judge entered the court with his face flaming, 'he snorted and squeaked, blew his nose and clenched his hands, and lifted up his eyes, mimicking their manner, and running on furiously, as, he said, they used to pray.' The ermined buffoon extorted a smile even from the Nonconformists themselves. Pollexfen, the leading counsel for the defence, gave in to the humour, and attempted to gain attention for his argument by a jest. 'My Lord,' he said, 'some will think it a hard measure to stop these men's mouths, and not to let them speak through their noses.' 'Pollexfen,' said Jeffries, 'I know you well. You are the patron of the faction; this is an old rogue, who has poisoned the world with his Kidderminster doctrine. He encouraged all the women to bring their bodkins and thimbles, to carry on the war against their King, of ever blessed memory. An old schismatical knave — a hypocritical villain!' 'My Lord,' replied the counsel, 'Mr. Baxter's loyal and peaceable spirit, King Charles would have rewarded with a bishopric, when he came in, if he would have conformed.' 'Aye,' said the judge, 'we know that; but what ailed the old blockhead, the un-



thankful villain, that he would not conform? Is he wiser or better than other men? He hath been, ever since, the spring of the faction. I am sure he hath poisoned the world with his linsey-woolsey doctrine—a conceited, stubborn fanatical dog!’ After one counsel, and another, had been overborne by the fury of Jeffries, Baxter himself took up the argument. ‘My Lord,’ he said, ‘I have been so moderate with respect to the Church of England, that I have incurred the censure of many of the Dissenters on that account.’ ‘Baxter for Bishops,’ exclaimed the judge, ‘is a merry conceit indeed! Turn to it, turn to it!’ On this one of the counsel turned to a passage in the libel, which stated, ‘that great respect is due to those truly called bishops amongst us.’ ‘Aye,’ said Jeffries, ‘this is your Presbyterian cant, *truly* called to be bishops; that is of himself, and such rascals, called the Bishops of Kidderminster, and other such places. The bishops set apart by such factious, snivelling Presbyterians as himself; a Kidderminster bishop he means, when, according to the saying of a late learned author, every parish shall maintain a tithe-pig metropolitan.’ Baxter offering to speak again, Jeffries exploded in the following apostrophe: ‘Richard! Richard! dost thou think here to poison the court? Richard, thou art an old fellow—an old knave; thou hast written books enough to load a cart, every one as full of sedition, I might say treason, as an egg is full of meat. Hadst thou been whipped out of thy writing trade forty years ago, it had been happy. I know thou hast a mighty party, and I see a great many of the brotherhood in corners, waiting to see what will become of their mighty Don, and a doctor of your party at your elbow; but I will crush you all. Come, what do you say for yourself, you old knave—come, speak up, what doth he say? I am not afraid of him, or of all the snivelling calves you have got about you,’—alluding to some persons who were in tears at this scene. ‘Your Lordship need not,’ said Baxter, ‘for I’ll not hurt you. But these things will surely be understood one day; what fools one sort of Protestants are made, to prosecute the other.’ Then lifting up his eyes to Heaven, he said, ‘I am not concerned to answer such stuff, but am ready to produce my writings, in confutation of all this; and my life and conversation are known to many in this nation.’

The jury returned a verdict of guilty, and, but for the resistance of the other judges, Jeffries would have added whipping through the city, to the sentence of imprisonment. It was to continue until the prisoner should have paid five hundred marks. Baxter was at that time in his seventieth year. A childless widower, groaning under agonies of bodily pain, and reduced by former persecutions to sell all that he possessed, he entered the King’s Bench

prison in utter poverty; and remained there for nearly two years, hopeless of any other abode on earth. But the hope of a mansion of eternal peace and love raised him beyond the reach of human tyranny. He possessed his soul in patience. Wise and good men resorted to his prison, and brought back from him greetings to his distant friends, and maxims of piety and prudence. Happy in the review of a well-spent life, and still happier in the prospect of its early close, his spirit enjoyed a calm for which his enemies might have joyfully resigned their mitres and their thrones. His pen, the faithful companion of his troubles, as of his joys, still plied the Herculean tasks which habit had rendered not merely easy, but delightful to him; and what mattered the gloomy walls or the obscene riot of a gaol, while he was free to wander from early dawn to nightfall over the sublime heights of devotion, or through the interminable, but, to him, not pathless, wilderness of psychology? There pain and mortal sickness were unheeded, and even his long-lost wife forgotten, or remembered only that he might rejoice in the nearer approach of their indissoluble re-union. The altered policy of the Court restored him for a while to the questionable advantage of bodily freedom. 'At this time,' says the younger Calamy, 'he talked about another world like one that had been there, and was come as an express from thence to make a report concerning it.' But age, sickness, and persecution had done their work. His material frame gave way to the pressure of disease, though, in the language of one of his last associates, 'his soul abode rational, strong in faith and hope.' That his dying hours were agitated by the doubts which had clouded his earlier days, has been often, but erroneously, asserted. With manly truth, he rejected, as affectation, the wish for death, to which some pretend. He assumed no stoical indifference to pain, and indulged in no unhallowed familiarity on those awful subjects which occupy the thoughts of him whose eye is closing on sublunary things, and is directed to an instant eternity. In profound lowliness, with a settled reliance on the Divine mercy, repeating at frequent intervals the prayer of the Redeemer on whom his hopes reposed, and breathing out benedictions on those who encircled his dying bed, he passed away from a life of almost unequalled toil and suffering, to a new condition of existence, where he doubted not to enjoy that perfect conformity of the human to the Divine will, to which, during his long and painful pilgrimage, it had been his ceaseless labour to attain.

The record of the solitary, rather than of the social, hours of a man of letters, must form the staple of his biography; yet he must

be a strenuous reader, who should be able, from his own knowledge, to prepare such a record of the fruits of Richard Baxter's solitude. After a familiarity of many years with his writings, we must avow, that of the one hundred and sixty-eight volumes comprised in the catalogue of his printed works, there are many which we have never opened, and many with which we can boast but a very slight acquaintance. These, however, are such as (to borrow a phrase from Mr. Hallam) have ceased to belong to men, and have become the property of moths. From the recesses of the library in Red Cross Street they lower, in the sullen majority of the folio age, over the pigmies of this duodecimo generation — the expressive, though neglected monuments of occurrences, which can never lose their place, or their interest, in the history of theological literature.

The English Reformation produced no Luther, Calvin, Zuingli, or Knox—no man who imparted to the national mind the impress of his own character, or the heritage of his religious creed. Our Reformers, Cranmer scarcely excepted, were statesmen rather than divines. Neither he, nor those more properly called the martyrs of the Church of England, ever attempted the stirring appeals to mankind at large, which awakened the echoes of the presses and the pulpits of Germany, Switzerland, and France. From the papal to the royal supremacy—from the legantine to the archiepiscopal power—from the Roman missal to the Anglican liturgy, the transition was easy, and, in many respects, not very perceptible. An ambidexter controversialist, the English Church warred at once with the errors of Rome and of Geneva; until, relenting towards her first antagonist, she turned the whole power of her arms against her domestic and more dreaded enemy. To the resources of piety, genius, and learning, she added less legitimate weapons; and the Puritans underwent confiscation, imprisonment, exile, compulsory silence,—everything, in short, except conviction. When the civil wars set loose their tongues and gave freedom to their pens, the Nonconformists found themselves without any established standard of religious belief; every question debatable; and every teacher conscience-bound to take his share in the debate. Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, Seekers, Familists, Behmenists, and Quakers, were agreed only in cementing a firm alliance against their common enemies, the Prelatists and Papists. Those foes subdued, they turned against each other, some contending for supremacy, and some for toleration, but all for what they severally regarded, or professed to regard, as truth. Nor were theirs the polemics of the schools or the cloister. The war of religious

opinion was accompanied by the roar of Cromwell's artillery, by the fall of ancient dynasties, and by the growth of a military, though a forbearing despotism.

It was an age of deep earnestness. Frivolous and luxurious men had for a while retreated to make way for impassioned and high-wrought spirits; for the interpreters at once of the ancient revelations, and of the present judgments, of heaven; for the monitors of an ungodly world; and for the comforters of those who bent beneath the weight of national and domestic calamities. Such were that memorable race of authors to whom is given collectively the name of the Puritan divines; and such, above all the rest, was Richard Baxter. Intellectual efforts of such severity as his, relieved by not so much as one passing smile—public services of such extent, interrupted by no one recorded relaxation—thoughts so sleeplessly intent on those awful subjects, in the presence of which all earthly interests are annihilated—might seem a weight too vast for human endurance; as assuredly it forms an example which few would have the power, and fewer still would find the will, to imitate. His seventy-five years, unbroken by any transient glance at this world's gaieties; his one hundred and sixty-eight volumes, where the fancy never once disports herself; a mortal man absorbed in the solemn realities, and absolutely independent of all the illusions, of life, appears like a fiction, and a dull one too. Yet it is an exact, and not an uninviting, truth.

Never was the alliance of soul and body formed on terms of greater inequality than in Baxter's person. It was like the compact in the fable, where all the spoils and honours fall to the giant's share, while the poor dwarf puts up with all the danger and the blows. The mournful list of his chronic diseases renders almost miraculous the mental vigour which bore him through exertions resembling those of a disembodied spirit. But his ailments were such as, without affecting his mental powers, gave repose to his animal appetites, and quenched the thirst for all the emoluments and honours of this sublunary state. Death, though delaying to strike, stood continually before him, ever quickening his attention to that awful presence, by approaching the victim under some new or varied aspect of disease. Under this influence he wrote, and spoke, and acted—a dying man, conversant with the living in all their pursuits, but taking no share in their transient hopes and fugitive emotions. Every returning day was welcomed and improved, as though it were to be his last. Each sermon which he delivered might not improbably be a farewell admonition to his audience. The sheets which lay before him were rapidly filled with the first suggestions of his mind in the first words which



offered; for to-morrow's sun might find him unable to complete the momentous task. All the graces and the negligences of composition were alike unheeded; for how labour as an artist when the voice of human applause might in a few short hours become inaudible!

In Baxter, the characteristics of his age, and of his associates, were thus heightened by the peculiarities of his own physical and mental constitution. Their earnestness passed in him into a profound solemnity; their diligence into an unrelaxing intensity of employment; their disinterestedness into a fixed disdain of the objects for which other men contend. Even the episode of his marriage is in harmony with the rest. He renounced the property with which it would have encumbered him, and stipulated for the absolute command of his precarious and inestimable time. Had this singular concentration of thought and purpose befallen a man of quick sympathies, it would have overborne his spirits, if it had not impaired his reason. But Baxter was naturally stern. Had it overtaken a man of excitable imagination, it would have engendered a troop of fantastic and extravagant day-dreams. But to Baxter's vision all the objects which fascinate ordinary observers, presented themselves with a hard outline, colourless, and with no surrounding atmosphere. Had it been united to a cold and selfish heart, the result would have been a life of ascetic fanaticism. But Baxter was animated by an enlarged, though a calm philanthropy. His mind, though never averted from the remembrance of his own and of others' eternal doom, was still her own sovereign; diligently examining the foundations, and determining the limits of belief; methodising her opinions with painful accuracy, and expanding them into all their theoretical or practical results, as patiently as ever analyst explored the depths of the differential calculus. Still every thing was practical and to the purpose. 'I have looked,' he says, 'over Hutton, Vives, Erasmus, Scaliger, Salmasius, Casaubon, and many other critical grammarians, and all Gruter's critical volumes. I have read almost all the physics and metaphysics I could hear of. I have wasted much of my time among loads of historians, chronologers, and antiquaries. I despise none of their learning — all truth is useful. Mathematics, which I have least of, I find a pretty and manlike sport; but if I had no other kind of knowledge than these, what were my understanding worth? What a dreaming dotard should I be! I have higher thoughts of the schoolmen than Erasmus and our other grammarians had. I much value the method and sobriety of Aquinas, the subtlety of Scotus and Ockam, the plainness of Durandus, the solidity of Ariminensis, the profundity of Bradwardine, the excellent acuteness

of many of their followers; of Aureolus, Capreolus, Bannes, Alvarez, Zumel, &c.; of Mayro, Lychetus, Trombeta, Faber, Meurisse, Rada, &c.; of Ruiz, Pennattes, Saurez, Vasques, &c.; of Hurtado, of Albertinus, of Lud à Dola, and many others. But how loth should I be to take such sauce for my food, and such recreations for my business! The jingling of too much and false philosophy among them often drowns the noise of Aaron's bells. I feel myself much better in Herbert's "Temple."

Within the precincts of that temple, and to the melody of those bells, he accordingly proceeded to erect the vast monument of his theological works. Their basis was laid in a series of 'Aphorisms on Justification'—an attempt to fix the sense of the sacred volume on those topics which constitute the essential peculiarities of the Christian system. The assaults with which the Aphorisms had been encountered were repelled by his 'Apology,' a large volume in quarto. The 'Apology' was, within a few months, reinforced by another quarto, entitled his 'Confession of Faith.' Between four and five hundred pages of 'Disputations' came to the succour of the 'Confession.' Then appeared four treatises on the 'Doctrine of Perseverance,' on 'Saving Faith,' on 'Justifying Righteousness,' and on 'Universal Redemption.' Next in order is a folio of seven hundred pages, entitled 'Catholic Theology, plain, pure, peaceable,' unfolding and resolving all the controversies of the Schoolmen, the Papists, and the Protestants. This was eclipsed by a still more ponderous folio in Latin, entitled 'Methodus Theologiæ Christianæ,' composed, to quote his own words, 'in my retirement at Totteridge, in a troublesome, smoky, suffocating room, in the midst of daily pains of sciatica, and many worse.' After laying down the nature of Deity, and of things in general, he discloses all the relations, eternal and historical, between God and man, with all the abstract truths, and all the moral obligations, deducible from them;—detecting the universal presence of a Trinity, not in the Divine Being only, but in all things spiritual and material which flow from the great fountain of life. With another book, entitled 'An End of Doctrinal Controversies,'—a title, he observes, 'not intended as a prognostic, but as didactical and corrective,'—terminated his efforts to close up the mighty questions which touch on man's highest hopes and interests. He had thrown upon them such an incredible multitude and variety of cross lights, as effectually to dazzle any intellectual vision less aquiline than his own.

His next enterprise was to win mankind to religious concord. A progeny of twelve books, most of them of considerable volume, attest his zeal in this arduous cause. Blessed, we are told, are the

peacemakers ; but the benediction is unaccompanied with the promise of tranquillity. He found, indeed, a patron in ‘His Highness, Richard, Lord Protector,’ whose rule he acknowledged as lawful, though he had denied the authority of his father. Addressing that wise and amiable man, ‘I observe,’ he says, ‘that the nation generally rejoice in your peaceable entrance upon the government. Many are persuaded that you have been strangely kept from participating in any of our late bloody contentions, that God might make you the healer of our breaches, and employ you in that temple work which David himself might not be honoured with, though it was in his mind, because he shed blood abundantly, and made great wars.’

Stronger minds, and less gentle hearts, than that of Richard repelled with natural indignation counsels which rebuked all the contending parties. Amongst these was ‘one Malpas, an old scandalous minister,’ ‘and Edward Bagshawe, a young man who had written formerly against monarchy, and afterwards against Bishop Morley, and being of a resolute Roman spirit, was sent first to the Tower, and then lay in a horrid dungeon ;’ and who wrote a book ‘full of untruths, which the furious temerarious man did utter out of the rashness of his mind.’ In his dungeon, poor Bagshawe died, and Baxter closes the debate with tenderness and pathos. ‘While we wrangle here in the dark, we are dying, and passing to the world that will decide all our controversies, and the safest passage thither is by peaceable holiness.’ Dr. Owen, one of the foremost in the first rank of the divines of his age, had borne much ; but these exhortations to concord he could not bear ; and he taught his monitor, that he who undertakes to reconcile enemies must be prepared for the loss of friends. It was on every account a desperate endeavour. Baxter was opposed to every sect, and belonged to none. He can be properly described only as a Baxterian — at once the founder and the single member of an eclectic school, within the portals of which he invited all men, but persuaded none, to take refuge from their mutual animosities.

Had Baxter been content merely to establish truth, and to decline the refutation of error, many might have listened to a voice so affectionate, and to counsels so profound. But ‘while he spake to them of peace, he made him ready for battle.’ Ten volumes, many of them full-grown quartos, vindicated his secession from the Church of England. Five other batteries, equally well served, were successively opened against the Antinomians, the Quakers, the Baptists, the Millenarians, and the Grotians. The last, of whom Dodwell was the leader, prefigured, in the reign of Charles, the divines who flourish at Oxford in the reign of Victoria.

Long it were, and not very profitable, to record the events of these theological campaigns. They brought into the field Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and Dodwell. The men of learning were aided by the men of wit. Womack, the Bishop of St. David's, had incurred Baxter's censure for his 'abusive, virulent accusations' of the Synod of Dort, in a book which the Bishop had published under the name of 'Tilenus Junior.' To this attack appeared an answer, entitled 'The Examination of Tilenus before the Triers, in order to his intended settlement in the office of a public preacher in the commonwealth of Utopia.' Among the jurors empannelled for the trial of Tilenus, are 'Messrs. Absolute,' 'Fatality,' 'Preterition,' 'Narrow Grace, *alias* Stint Grace,' 'Take o' Trust,' 'Know Little,' and 'Dubious,'—the last the established sobriquet for Richard Baxter.

But neither smile nor sigh could be extorted from the veteran polemic; nor, in truth, had he much right to be angry. If not with equal pleasantry, he had, with at least equal freedom, invented appellations for his opponents;—designating Dodwell, or his system, as 'Leviathan, absolute destructive Prelacy, the son of Abaddon, Apollyon, and not of Jesus Christ.' Statesmen joined in the affray. Morice, Charles's first Secretary of State, contributed a treatise: and Lauderdale, who, with all his faults, was an accomplished scholar, and amidst all his inconsistencies a staunch Presbyterian, accepted the dedication of one of Baxter's controversial pieces, and presented him with twenty guineas. The unvarying kindness to the persecuted Nonconformist of one who was himself a relentless persecutor, is less strange than the fact, that the future courtier of Charles read, during his imprisonment at Windsor, the whole of Baxter's then published works, and, as their grateful author records, remembered them better than himself. While the pens of the wise, the witty, and the great, were thus employed against the universal antagonist, the Quakers assailed him with their tongues. Who could recognise, in the gentle and benevolent people who now bear that name, a trace of their ancestral character, of which Baxter has left the following singular record?—"The Quakers in their shops, when I go along London Streets, say, "Alas! poor man, thou art yet in darkness." They have oft come to the congregation, when I had liberty to preach Christ's gospel, and cried out against me as a deceiver of the people. They have followed me home, crying out in the streets, "the day of the Lord is coming, and thou shalt perish as a deceiver." They have stood in the market-place, and under my window, year after year, crying to the people, "take heed of your priests, they deceive your souls;" and if any one wore a lace



or neat clothing, they cried out to me, "these are the fruits of your ministry."

Against the divorce of divinity and politics, Baxter vehemently protested, as the putting asunder of things which a sacred ordinance had joined together. He therefore published a large volume, entitled 'The Holy Commonwealth; a Plea for the Cause of Monarchy, but as under God, the Universal Monarch.' Far better to have roused against himself all the quills which had ever bristled on all the 'fretful porcupines' of theological strife. For, while vindicating the ancient government of England, he hazarded a distinct avowal of opinions, which, with their patrons, were about to be proscribed with the return of the legitimate Sovereign. He taught that the laws of England are above the King; 'that Parliament was his highest court, where his personal will and word were not sufficient authority.' He vindicated the war against Charles, and explained the apostolical principle of obedience to the higher powers as extending to the senate as well as to the emperor. The royal power had been given 'for the common good, and no cause could warrant the king to make the commonwealth the party which he should exercise hostility against.'

All this was published at the moment of the fall of Richard Cromwell. Amidst the multitude of answers which it provoked may be especially noticed those of Harrington, the author of the 'Oceana,' and of Edward Pettit. 'The former,' says Baxter, 'seemed in a Bethlehem rage, for, by way of scorn, he printed half a sheet of foolish jests, in such words as idiots or drunkards use, railing at ministers as a pack of fools and knaves, and, by his gibberish derision, persuading men that we deserve no other answer than such scorn and nonsense as besecmeth fools. With most insolent pride, he carried it as neither I nor any minister understood at all what policy was; but prated against we knew not what, and had presumed to speak against other men's art, which he was master of, and his knowledge, to such idiots as we, incomprehensible.'

Pettit places Baxter in hell, where Bradshawe acts as President of an infernal tribunal, and Hobbes and Neville strive in vain to obtain from his adjudication the crown for pre-eminence of evil and mischief on earth; which he awards to the Nonconformist. 'Let him come in,' exclaims the new Rhadamanthus, 'and be crowned with wreaths of serpents and chaplets of adders. Let his triumphant chariot be a pulpit drawn on the wheels of cannon by a brace of wolves in sheep's clothing. Let the ancient fathers of the Church, whom out of ignorance he has vilified; the reverend and learned prelates, whom out of pride and malice he has belied,

abused, and persecuted; the most righteous King, whose murder he has justified—let them all be bound in chains to attend his infernal triumph to his “Saint’s Everlasting Rest;” then make room, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, atheists, and politicians, for the greatest rebel on earth, and next to him that fell from heaven.’

Nor was this all. The ‘Holy Commonwealth’ was amongst the books which the University of Oxford sentenced to the flames which, in a former generation, had been less innocently kindled at the same place, against the persons of men who had dared to proclaim unwelcome truths. Morley, and many others, branded it as treason; and the King was taught to regard the author as one of the most inveterate enemies of the royal authority. South joined in the universal clamour; and Baxter, in his autobiography, records, that when that great wit and author had been called to preach before the King, and a vast congregation drawn together by his high celebrity, he was compelled, after a quarter of an hour, to desist and to retire from the pulpit, exclaiming, ‘the Lord be merciful to our infirmities!’ The sermon, which should have been recited, was afterwards published, and it appeared that the passage at which South’s presence of mind had failed him, was an invective against the ‘Holy Commonwealth!’

After enduring for ten years the storm which his book had provoked, Baxter took the very singular course of publishing a revocation, desiring the world to consider it as *non scriptum*;—maintaining, nevertheless, the general principles of his work, and ‘protesting against the judgment of Posterity, and all others that were not of the same time and place, as to the mental censure either of the book or revocation, as being ignorant of the true reason of them both.’ We of this age, therefore, who, for the present, constitute the Posterity, against whose rash judgment this protest was entered, must be wary in censuring what, it must be confessed, is not very intelligible; except, indeed, as it is not difficult to perceive, that he had motives enough for retreating from an unprofitable strife, even though the retreat could not be very skilfully accomplished.

Two volumes of Ecclesiastical History, the first a quarto of five hundred pages, the second a less voluminous vindication of its predecessor, attest the extent of Baxter’s labours in this department of theological literature, and the stupendous compass of his reading. The authorities he enumerates, and from a diligent study of which his work is drawn, would form a considerable library.

Such labours as those we have mentioned, might seem to have left no vacant space in a life otherwise so actively employed. But these books, and the vast mass of unpublished manuscripts, are not

the most extensive, as they are incomparably the least valuable, of the produce of his solitary hours.

With the exception of Grotius, Baxter is the earliest of that long series of eminent writers who have undertaken to establish the truth of Christianity, by a systematic exhibition of the evidence and the arguments in favour of the divine origin of our faith. All homage to their cause, for we devoutly believe it to be the cause of truth! Be it acknowledged that their labours could not have been declined, without yielding a temporary and dangerous triumph to sophistry and presumptuous ignorance. Admit (as indeed it is scarcely possible to exaggerate) their boundless superiority to their antagonists in learning, in good faith, in sagacity, in range and in depth of thought, and in whatever else was requisite in this momentous controversy;—concede, as for ourselves we delight to confess, that they have advanced their proofs to the utmost heights of probability which by such reasonings it is possible to scale;—and yet with all these concessions may not inconsistently be combined some distaste for these inquiries, and some doubt of their real value.

The sacred writers have none of the timidity of their modern apologists. They never sue for an assent to their doctrines, but authoritatively command the acceptance of them. They denounce unbelief as guilt, and insist on faith as a virtue of the highest order. In their Catholic invitations, the intellectual not less than the social distinctions of mankind are unheeded. Every student of their writings is aware of these facts; but the solution of them is less commonly observed. It is, we apprehend, that the Apostolic authors assume the existence in all men of a ‘Spiritual Discernment,’ enabling the mind, when unclouded by appetite or passion, to recognise and distinguish the Divine voice, whether uttered from within by the intimations of conscience, or speaking from without in the language of inspired oracles. They presuppose that vigour of reason may consist with feebleness of understanding; and that the power of discriminating between religious truth and error, does not chiefly depend on the culture or on the exercise of the mere argumentative faculty. The especial patrimony of the poor and the illiterate, the Gospel has been the stay of countless millions who never framed a syllogism. Of the great multitudes whom no man can number, who, before and since the birth of Grotius, have lived in the peace, and died in the consolations, of our faith, how incomparably few are they whose convictions have been derived from the study of works like his! Of the numbers who have addicted themselves to such studies, how small is the proportion of those who have brought to the task either learning,

or leisure, or industry sufficient to enable them to form an independent judgment on the questions in debate! Called to the exercise of a judicial function for which he is but ill prepared—addressed by pleadings on an issue where his prepossessions are all but unalterable,—bidden to examine evidences which he has most rarely the skill, the learning, or the leisure to verify,—and pressed by arguments, sometimes overstrained, and sometimes fallacious—he who lays the foundations of his faith in such ‘evidences,’ will but too commonly end either in yielding a credulous, and therefore an infirm, assent, or by reposing in a self-sufficient, and far more hazardous, incredulity.

For these reasons we attach less value to the long series of Baxter’s works in support of the foundations of the Christian faith, than to the rest of his books which have floated in safety down the tide of time to the present day. Yet it would be difficult to select from the same class of writings any more eminently distinguished by the earnest love and the fearless pursuit of truth; or to name an inquirer into these subjects, who possessed, and exercised to a greater extent, the power of suspending his long cherished opinions, and of closely interrogating every doubt by which they were obstructed.

In his solicitude to sustain the conclusions he had so laboriously formed, Baxter unhappily invoked the aid of arguments, which, however impressive in his own days, are answered in ours by a smile, if not by a sneer. The sneer, however, would be at once unmerited and unwise. When Hale was adjudging witches to death, and More preaching against their guilt, and Boyle investigating the sources of their power, it is not surprising that Baxter availed himself of the evidence afforded by witchcraft and apparitions in proof of the existence of a world of spirits; and therefore in support of one of the fundamental tenets of revealed religion. Marvellous, however, it is, in running over his historical discourse on that subject, to find him giving so unhesitating an assent to the long list of extravagances and nursery tales which he has there brought together; unsupported, as they almost all are, by any proof that such facts occurred at all, or by any decorous pretext for referring them to preternatural agency.

Simon Jones, a stout-hearted and able-bodied soldier, standing sentinel at Worcester, was driven away from his post by the appearance of something like a headless bear. A drunkard was warned against intemperance by the lifting up of his shoes by an invisible hand. One of the witches condemned by Hale threw a girl into fits. Mr. Emlin, a bystander, ‘suddenly felt a force pull one of the hooks from his breeches, and, while he looked with



wonder what had become of it, the tormented girl vomited it up out of her mouth.' At the house of Mr. Beecham, there was a tobacco pipe which had the habit of 'moving itself from a shelf at one end of the room to a shelf at the other end of the room.' When Mr. Munn, the minister, went to witness the prodigy, the tobacco pipe remained stationary; but a great Bible made a spontaneous leap into his lap, and opened itself at a passage, on the hearing of which the evil spirit who had possessed the pipe was exorcised. 'This Mr. Munn himself told me, when in the sickness year, 1665, I lived in Stockerson Hall. I have no reason to suspect the veracity of a sober man, a constant preacher, and a good scholar.'

Baxter was credulous and incredulous for precisely the same reason. Possessing, by long habit, a mastery over his thoughts, such as few other men ever acquired, a single effort of the will was sufficient to exclude from his view whatever recollections he judged hostile to his immediate purpose. Every prejudice was at once banished when any debatable point was to be scrutinised; and, with equal facility, every reasonable doubt was exiled when his only object was to enforce or to illustrate a doctrine of the truth of which he was assured. The perfect submission of the will to the reason may belong to some higher state of being than ours. On mortal man that gift is not bestowed. In the best and the wisest, inclination will often grasp the reins by which she ought to be guided, and misdirect the judgment which she should obey. Happy they who, like Baxter, have so disciplined the affections, as to disarm their temporary usurpation of all its more dangerous tendencies!

Controversies are ephemeral. Ethics, metaphysics, and political philosophy are doomed to an early death, unless when born of genius and nurtured by intense and self-denying industry. Even the theologians of one age must, alas! too often disappear to make way for those of later times. But if there is an exception to the general decree which consigns man and his intellectual offspring to the same dull forgetfulness, it is in favour of such writings as those which fill the four folio volumes bearing the title of 'Baxter's Practical Works.' Their appearance in twenty-three smart octavos is nothing short of a profanation. Hew down the Pyramids into a range of streets! divide Niagara into a succession of water privileges! but let not the spirits of the mighty dead be thus evoked from their majestic shrines to animate the dwarfish structures of our bookselling generation.

Deposit one of those grey folios on a resting-place equal to that venerable burden, then call up the patient and serious thoughts

which its very aspect should inspire, and confess that, among the writings of uninspired men, there are none better fitted to awaken, to invigorate, to enlarge, or to console the mind, which can raise itself to such celestial colloquy. True, they abound in undistinguishable distinctions; the current of emotion, when flowing most freely, is but too often obstructed by metaphysical rocks and shallows, or diverted from its course into some dialectic winding; one while the argument is obscured by fervent expostulation; at another the passion is dried up by the analysis of the ten thousand springs of which it is compounded; here is a maze of subtleties to be unravelled, and there a crowd of the obscurely learned to be refuted; the unbroken solemnity may now and then shed some gloom on the traveller's path, and the length of the way may occasionally entice him to slumber. But where else can be found an exhibition, at once so vivid and so chaste, of the diseases of the human heart—a detection so fearfully exact, of the sophistries of which we are first the voluntary, and then the unconscious victims—a light thrown with such intensity on the madness and the woe of every departure from the rules of virtue—a development of those rules at once so comprehensive and so elevated—counsels more shrewd or more persuasive—or a proclamation more consolatory of the resources provided by Christianity for escaping the dangers by which we are surrounded, of the eternal rewards she promises, or of the temporal blessings she imparts, as an earnest and a foretaste of them?

‘*Largior hic campis ather.*’ Charles, and Laud, and Cromwell are forgotten. We have no more to do with anti-pædobaptism or prelacy. L'Estrange and Morley disturb not this higher region; but man, and his noblest pursuits—Deity, in the highest conceptions of his attributes which can be extracted from the poor materials of human thought—the world we inhabit, divested of the illusions which ensnare us—the world to which we look forward, bright with the choicest colours of hope—the glorious witnesses, and the Divine Example and the Divine Supporter of our conflict—throng, and animate, and inform every crowded page. In this boundless repository, the intimations of inspired wisdom are pursued into all their bearings on the various conditions and exigencies of life, with a fertility which would inundate and overpower the most retentive mind, had it not been balanced by a method and a discrimination even painfully elaborate. Through the vast accumulation of topics, admonitions, and inquiries, the love of truth is universally conspicuous. To every precept is appended the limitations it seems to demand. No difficulty is evaded. Dogmatism is never permitted to usurp the province of

argument. Each equivocal term is curiously defined, and each plausible doubt narrowly examined. Not content to explain the results he has reached, he exhibits the process by which they were excogitated, and lays open all the secrets of his mental laboratory. And a wondrous spectacle it is. Calling to his aid an extent of theological and scholastic lore sufficient to equip a whole college of divines, and moving beneath the load with unencumbered freedom, he expatiates and rejoices in all the intricacies of his way—now plunging into the deepest thickets of casuistic and psychological speculation—and then emerging from them to resume his chosen task of probing the conscience, by remonstrances from which there is no escape—or of quickening the sluggish feelings, by strains of devotion in which it is impossible not to join.

That expostulations and arguments of which almost all admit the justice, and the truth of which none can disprove, should fall so ineffectually on the ear, and should so seldom reach the heart, is a phenomenon worthy of more than a passing notice, and meriting an inquiry of greater exactness than it usually receives even from those who profess the art of healing our spiritual maladies. To resolve it ‘into the corruption of human nature,’ is but to change the formula in which the difficulty is proposed. To affirm that a corrupt nature always gives an undue preponderance to the present above the future, is untrue in fact; for some of our worst passions—avarice, for example, revenge, ambition, and the like—chiefly manifest their power in the utter disregard of immediate privations and sufferings, with a view to a supposed remote advantage. To represent the world as generally incredulous as to the reality of a retributive state, is to contradict universal experience, which shows how firmly that persuasion is incorporated with the language, habits, and thoughts of mankind;—manifesting itself most distinctly in those great exigencies of life, when disguise is the least practicable. To refer to an external spiritual agency, determining the will to a wise or a foolish choice, is only to reproduce the original question in another form—what is that structure or mechanism of the human mind by means of which such influences operate to control or to guide our volitions?

The best we can throw out as an answer to the problem is, that the constitution of our frames, partly sensitive and partly rational, and, corresponding with this, the condition of our sublunary existence, pressed by animal as well as by spiritual wants, condemns us to a constant oscillation between the sensual and the divine, between the propensities which we share with the brute creation, and the aspirations which connect us with the Author of our being. The rational soul contemplates means only in reference to their

ends; whilst the sensuous nature reposes in means alone, and looks no further. Imagination, alternately the ally of each, most readily lends her powerful aid to the ignobler party. Her golden hues are more easily employed to exalt and refine the grossness of appetite, than to impart brilliancy and allurements to objects brought within the sphere of human vision by the exercise of faith and hope. Her draperies are adjusted with greater facility to clothe the nakedness and to conceal the shame of those things with which she is most conversant, than to embellish the forms and add grace to the proportions of things obscurely disclosed at few and transient intervals.

It is with this formidable alliance of Sense and Imagination that Religion has to contend. Her aim is to win over to her side that all-powerful mental faculty which usually takes part with her antagonist, and thus to shed over each of our steps the colours borrowed from its ultimate, as contrasted with its immediate, tendency; to teach us to regard the pleasures and the pains of our mortal state in the light in which we shall view them in our immortal existence; to make things hateful or lovely now, according as they impede or promote our welfare hereafter. He is a religious, or, in the appropriate language of theology, a 'regenerate' man, who, trained to this discipline, habitually transfers to the means he employs the aversion or the attachment due to the end he contemplates; who discerns and loathes the poison in the otherwise tempting cup of unhallowed indulgence, and perceives and loves the medicinal balm in the otherwise bitter draught of hardy self-denial. Good Richard Baxter erected his four folio volumes as a dam with which to stay this confluent flood of sense and imagination, and to turn aside the waters into a more peaceful and salutary channel. When the force of the torrent is correctly estimated, it is more reasonable to wonder that he and his fellow-labourers have succeeded so well, than that their success has been no greater.

On his style as an author, Baxter himself is the best critic. 'The commonness and the greatness of men's necessity,' he says, 'commanded me to do anything that I could for their relief, and to bring forth some water to cast upon this fire, though I had not at hand a silver vessel to carry it in, nor thought it the most fit. The plainest words are the most profitable oratory in the weightiest matters. Fineness for ornament, and delicacy for delight; but they answer not necessity, though sometimes they may modestly attend that which answers it.' He wrote to give utterance to a full mind and a teeming spirit. Probably he never consumed forty minutes in as many years in the mere selection and adjust-



ment of words. So to have employed his time, would in his judgment have been a sinful waste of that precious gift. 'I thought to have acquainted the world with nothing but what was the work of time and diligence, but my conscience soon told me that there was too much of pride and selfishness in this, and that humility and self-denial required me to lay by the affectation of that style, and spare that industry, which tended but to advance my name with men, when it hindered the main work and crossed my end.' Such is his own account; and, had he consulted Quintilian, he could have found no better precept for writing well than that which his conscience gave him for writing usefully. The first of all the requisites for excelling in the art of composition is, as one of the greatest masters of that art in modern times (Sir Walter Scott) informs us, 'to have something to say.' When there are thoughts that burn, there never will be wanting words that breathe. Baxter's language is plain and perspicuous when his object is merely to inform; copious and flowing when he exhorts; and when he yields to the current of his feelings, it becomes redundant and impassioned, and occasionally picturesque and graphic. There are innumerable passages of the most touching pathos and unconscious eloquence, but not a single sentence written for effect. His chief merit as an artist is, that he is perfectly artless; and that he employs a style of great compass and flexibility, in such a manner as to demonstrate that he never thought about it, and as to prevent the reader, so long at least as he is reading, from thinking about it either.

The canons of criticism, which the great Nonconformist drew from his conscience, are, however, sadly inapplicable to verse. Mr. James Montgomery has given his high suffrage in favour of Baxter's poetical powers, and justifies his praise by a few passages selected from the rest with equal tenderness and discretion. It is impossible to subscribe to this heresy even in deference to such an authority; or to resist the suspicion that the piety of the critic has played false with his judgment. Nothing short of an actual and plenary inspiration will enable any man who composes as rapidly as he writes, to give meet utterance to those ultimate secretions of the deepest thoughts and the purest feelings in which the essence of poetry consists. Most of Baxter's verses, which however are not very numerous, would be decidedly improved by being shorn of their rhyme and rhythm, in which state they would look like very devout and judicious prose; as they really are.

Every man must and will have some relief from his more severe pursuits. His faithful pen attended Baxter in his pastime as in his studies; and produced an autobiography, which appeared after his

death in a large folio volume. Calamy desired to throw these posthumous sheets into the editorial crucible, and to reproduce them in the form of a corrected and well-arranged abridgment. Mr. Orme laments the obstinacy of the author's literary executor, which forbade the execution of this design. Few who know the book will agree with him. A strange chaos indeed it is. But Grainger has well said of the writer, that 'men of his size are not to be drawn in miniature.' Large as life, and finished to the most minute detail, his own portrait, from his own hand, exhibits to the curious in such things a delineation, of which they would not willingly spare a single stroke, and which would have lost all its force and freedom if reduced and varnished by any other limner, however practised, or however felicitous.

There he stands, an intellectual giant as he was, playing with his quill as Hercules with the distaff, his very sport a labour under which any one but himself would have staggered. Towards the close of the first book occurs a passage, which, though often republished, and familiar to most students of English literature, must yet be noticed as the most impressive record in our own language, if not in any tongue, of the gradual ripening of a powerful mind under the culture of incessant study, wide experience, and anxious self-observation. Mental anatomy, conducted by a hand at once so delicate and so firm, and comparisons, so exquisitely just, between the impressions and impulses of youth and the tranquil conclusions of old age, bring his career of strife and trouble to a close of unexpected and welcome serenity. In the full maturity of such knowledge as is to be acquired on earth of the mysteries of our mortal and of our immortal existence, the old man returns at last for repose to the elementary truths, the simple lessons, and the confiding affections of his childhood; and writes an unintended commentary, of unrivalled force and beauty, on the inspired declaration, that to 'become as little children' is the indispensable, though arduous, condition of attaining to true heavenly wisdom.

To substitute for this self-portraiture any other analysis of Baxter's intellectual and moral character would indeed be a vain attempt. If there be any defect or error of which he was unconscious, and which he therefore has not avowed, it was the combination in his mind of an undue reliance on his own powers of investigating truth, with an undue distrust in the result of his inquiries. He proposed to himself, and executed, the task of exploring the whole circle of the moral sciences, logic, ethics, divinity, politics, and metaphysics; and this toil he accomplished amidst public employments of ceaseless importunity, and bodily pains

almost unintermitted. Intemperance never assumed a more venial form; but that this insatiate thirst for knowledge was indulged to a faulty excess, no reader of his life, or of his works, can doubt.

In one of his most remarkable treatises ‘On Falsely Pretended Knowledge,’ the dangerous result of indulging this omnivorous appetite is peculiarly remarkable. Probabilities, the only objects of such studies, will at length become evanescent, or scarcely perceptible, when he who holds the scales refuses to adjust the balance, until satisfied that he has laden each with every suggestion and every argument which can be derived from every author who has preceded him in the same inquiries. Yet more hopeless is the search for truth, when this adjustment, after having been once made, is again to be verified as often as any new speculations are discovered; and when the very faculty of human understanding, and the laws of reasoning, are themselves to be questioned and examined anew as frequently as any doubt can be raised of their adaptation to their appointed ends. Busied with this immense apparatus, and applying it to this boundless field of inquiry, Baxter would have been bewildered by his own efforts, and lost in the mazes of an universal scepticism, but for the ardent piety which possessed his soul, and the ever recurring expectation of approaching death, which dissipated his ontological dreams, and roused him to the active duties, and the instant realities, of life. Even as it is, he has left behind him much, which, in direct opposition to his own purposes, might cherish the belief that human existence was some strange chimera, and human knowledge an illusion, did it not fortunately happen that he is tedious in proportion as he is mystical. Had he possessed and employed the wit and gaiety of Bayle, there are some of his writings to which a place must have been assigned in the *Index Expurgatorius* of Protestantism.

Amongst his contemporaries, Baxter appears to have been the object of general reverence, and of as general unpopularity. His temper was austere and irritable, his address ungracious and uncouth. While cordially admitting the merits of each rival sect, he concurred with none, but was the common censor and opponent of all. His own opinions on church government coincided with the later judgment, or, as it should be rather said, with the concessions, of Archbishop Usher. They adjusted the whole of that interminable dispute to their mutual satisfaction at a conference which did not last above half an hour; for each of them was too devoutly intent on the great objects of Christianity to differ with each other very widely as to mere ritual observances. The contentions by which our forefathers were agitated on these subjects,

have now happily subsided into a speculative and comparatively uninteresting debate. They produced their best, and perhaps their only desirable result, in diffusing through the Church, and amongst the people of England, an indestructible conviction of the folly of attempting to coerce the human mind into a servitude to any system or profession of belief; or of endeavouring to produce amongst men any real uniformity of opinion on subjects beyond the cognisance of the bodily senses, and of daily observation. They have taught us all to acknowledge in practice, though some may yet deny in theory, that as long as men are permitted to avow the truth, the inherit diversities of their understandings, and of their circumstances, must impel them to the acknowledgment of corresponding variations of judgment, on all questions which touch the mysteries of the present, or of the future, life. If no man laboured more, or with less success, to induce mankind to think alike on these topics, no one ever exerted himself more zealously, or more effectually, than did Richard Baxter, both by his life and his writings, to divert the world from those petty disputes which falsely assume the garb of religious zeal, to those eternal and momentous truths, in the knowledge, the love, and the practice of which, the essence of religion consists.

One word respecting the edition of his works, to which we referred in the outset. For the reason already mentioned, we have stuck to our long-revered folios, without reading so much as a page of their diminutive representatives, and can therefore report nothing about them. But after diligently and repeatedly reading the two introductory volumes by Mr. Orme, we rejoice in the opportunity of bearing testimony to the merits of a learned, modest, and laborious writer, who is now, however, beyond the reach of human praise or censure. He has done everything for Baxter's memory which could be accomplished by a skilful abridgment of his autobiography, and a careful analysis of the theological library of which he was the author; aided by an acquaintance with the theological literature of the seventeenth century, such as no man but himself has exhibited, and which it may safely be conjectured no other man possesses. Had Mr. Orme been a member of the Established Church, and had he chosen a topic more in harmony with the studies of that learned body, his literary abilities would have been far more correctly estimated, and more widely celebrated. They who dissent from her communion, and who are therefore excluded from her universities and her literary circles, are not, however, to expect for their writings the same toleration which is so firmly secured for their persons and their ministry. But let them not be dejected. Let them take for their examples



those whom they have selected as their teachers; and learning from Richard Baxter to live and to write, they will either achieve his celebrity, or will be content, as he was, to labour without any other recompense than the tranquillity of his own conscience, the love of the people among whom he dwelt, and the approbation of the Master to whom every hour of his life, and every page of his books, were alike devoted.

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## THE "EVANGELICAL" SUCCESSION.

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IF the enemies of Christianity in the commencement of the last century failed to accomplish its overthrow, they were at least successful in producing what at present appears to have been a strange and unreasonable panic. Middleton, Bolingbroke, and Mandeville, have now lost their terrors; and Chubb, Toland, Collins, and Woolston, are remembered, like the heroes of the Dunciad, only on account of the brilliancy of the *Auto-da-fé* at which they suffered. To these writers, however, belongs the credit of having suggested to Clarke his inquiries into the elementary truth on which all religion depends. By them Warburton was provoked to 'demonstrate' the Divine legation of Moses. They excited Bishop Newton to show the fulfilment of Prophecy, and Lardner to accumulate the proofs of the Credibility of the Gospels. A greater than any of these, Joseph Butler, was induced, by the same adversaries, to investigate the analogy of natural and revealed religion; and Berkeley and Sherlock, with a long catalogue of more obscure writers, crowded to the defence of the menaced citadel of the Faith. But in this anxiety to strengthen their ramparts the garrison not only declined to attempt new conquests, but withdrew from much of their ancient dominion. In this its apologetic age, English Theology was distinguished by an unwonted timidity and coldness. There was an end of the alliance which it had maintained from the days of Jewell to those of Leighton, with philosophy and eloquence, with wit, and poetry. Taylor and Hall, Donne and Hooker, Baxter and Howe, had spoken as men having authority, and with an unclouded faith in their Divine Mission. In that confidence they had grappled with every difficulty, and had wielded with equal ease and vigour all the resources of genius and of learning. Alternately searching the depths of the heart, and playing over the mere surface of the mind, they relieved the subtleties of logic by a quibble or a pun, and illuminated, by intense flashes of wit, the metaphysical abysses which it was their delight to tread. Even when

directing the spiritual affections to their highest exercise, they hazarded any quaint conceit which crossed their path, and gave way to every impulse of fancy or of passion. But Divinity was no longer to retain the foremost place in English literature. The Tillotsons and Seckers of a later age were alike distrustful of their readers and of themselves. Tame, cautious, and correct, they rose above the Tatlers and Spectators of their times, because on such themes as theirs it was impossible to be frivolous; but they can hardly be said to have contributed as largely as Steele and Addison to guide the opinions, or to form the character of their generation.

This depression of theology was aided by the state of political parties under the two first princes of the House of Brunswick. Low and High Church were but other names for Whigs and Tories; and while Hoadley and Atterbury wrangled about the principles of the Revolution, the sacred subjects which formed the pretext of their disputes were desecrated in the feelings of the multitude, who witnessed and enjoyed the controversy. Secure from further persecution, and deeply attached to the new order of things, the Dissenters were no longer roused to religious zeal by invidious secular distinctions; and Doddridge and Watts lamented the decline of their congregations from the standard of their ancient piety. The former victims of bigotry had become its proselytes, and joined in directing anathemas against the Pope and the Pretender, with still greater acrimony than against the Evil One, with whom good Protestants of all denominations associated them.

The theology of any age at once ascertains and regulates its moral stature; and, at the period of which we speak, the austere virtues of the Puritans, and the more meek and social, though not less devout, spirit of the Worthies of the Church of England, if still to be detected in the recesses of private life, were discountenanced by the general habits of society. The departure of the more pure and generous influences of earlier times may be traced nowhere more clearly than in those works of fiction, in which the prevailing profligacy of manners was illustrated by Fielding, Sterne, and Smollett; and proved, though with more honest purposes, by Richardson and Defoe.

It was at this period that the *Alma Mater* of Laud and Sacheverel was nourishing in her bosom a little band of pupils destined to accomplish a momentous revolution in the national character. Wesley had already attained the dawn of manhood, when, in 1714, his future rival and coadjutor, George Whitfield, was born at a tavern in Gloucester, of which his father was the host. The death

of the elder Whitfield within two years from that time, left the child to the care of his mother, who took upon herself the management of the 'Bell Inn;' though, as her son has gratefully recorded, she 'prudently kept him, in his tender years, from intermeddling with the tavern business.' In such a situation he almost inevitably fell into vices and follies, which have been exaggerated as much by the vehemence of his own confessions, as by the malignity of his enemies. They exhibit some curious indications of his future character. He filched his mother's purse, but gave part of the money to the poor. He stole books, but they were books of devotion. Irritated by the unlucky tricks of his playfellows, who, he says, in the language of David, 'compassed him about like bees,' he converted into a prayer the prophetic imprecation of the Psalmist—'In the name of the Lord I will destroy them.' The mind in which bad passions and devotional feelings were thus strongly knit together, was consigned, in early youth, to the culture of the master of the grammar-school of St. Mary de Crypt, in his native city; and there were given the first indications of his future eminence. He studied the English dramatic writers, and represented their female characters with applause; and when the mayor and aldermen were to be harangued by one of the scholars, the embryo field-preacher was selected to extol the merits, and to gratify the taste, of their worships. His erratic propensities were developed almost as soon as his powers of elocution. Wearied with the studies of the grammar-school, he extorted his mother's reluctant consent to return to the tavern; and there, he says, 'I put on my blue apron and my snuffers, washed mops, cleaned rooms, and, in one word, became professed and common Drawer for nigh a year and a-half.' The Tapster was, of course, occasionally tipsy, and always in request; but as even the flow of the tap may not be perennial, he found leisure to compose sermons, and stole from the night some hours for the study of the Bible.

At the Bell Inn there dwelt a sister-in-law of Whitfield's, with whom it was his fortune or his fault to quarrel; and to soothe his troubled spirit he 'would retire and weep before the Lord, as Hagar when flying from Sarah.' From the presence of this Sarah he accordingly fled to Bristol, and betook himself to the study of Thomas à Kempis; but returning once more to Gloucester, first exchanged Divinity for the drama, and then abandoned the dramatists for his long neglected school-books. For now had opened a prospect inviting him to the worthy use of those talents which might otherwise have been consumed either in sordid occupations, or in some obscure and fruitless efforts to assert his native superiority to ordinary men. Intelligence had reached his mother that



admission might be obtained at Pembroke College, Oxford, for her capricious and thoughtful boy; and the intuitive wisdom of a mother's love assured her that through this avenue he might advance to distinction, if not to fortune. A few more oscillations between dissolute tastes and heavenward desires, and the youth finally gained the mastery over his lower appetites. From his seventeenth year to his dying day he lived amongst embittered enemies and jealous friends, without a stain on his reputation.

In 1731 the gates of Pembroke College had finally closed on the rude figure of one of her illustrious sons, expelled by poverty to seek a precarious subsistence, and to earn a lasting reputation, in the obscure alleys of London. In the following year they were opened to a pupil as ill provided with this world's wealth as Samuel Johnson, but destined to acquire a still more extensive and a more enduring celebrity. The waiter at the Bell Inn had become a servitor at Oxford — no great advancement in the social scale, according to the habits of that age—yet a change which conferred the means of elevation on a mind too ardent to leave any such advantage unimproved. He became the associate of Charles, and the disciple of John Wesley, who had at that time taken as their spiritual guide the celebrated mystic William Law. These future chiefs of a religious revolution were then 'interrogating themselves whether they had been simple and collected; whether they had prayed with fervour Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and on Saturday noon; if they had used a collect at nine, twelve, and three o'clock; duly meditated on Sunday from three to four on Thomas à Kempis; or mused on Wednesday and Friday from twelve to one on the Passion.'

But Quietism, indigenous in the East, is an exotic in this cold and busy land of ours, bearing at the best but sorry fruit, and hastening to a premature decay. Never was mortal man less fitted for the contemplative state than George Whitfield. It was an attempt as hopeful as that of converting a balloon into an observatory. He dressed the character indeed to admiration, for 'he thought it unbecoming a penitent to have his hair powdered, and wore woollen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes.' But the sublime abstractions which should people the cell and haunt the spirit of the hermit he wooed in vain. In the hopeless attempt to do nothing but meditate, 'the power of meditating or even thinking was,' he says, 'taken from him.' Castanza on the 'Spiritual Combat' advised him to talk but little: and 'Satan said he must not talk at all.' The Divine Redeemer had been surrounded in his temptations by deserts and wild beasts, and to approach this example as closely as the localities allowed, Whitfield was accustomed to

select Christ Church Meadow as the scene, and a stormy night as the time, of his mental conflicts. He prostrated his body on the bare earth, fasted during Lent, and exposed himself to the cold till his hands began to blacken, and 'by abstinence and inward struggles so emaciated his body as to be scarcely able to creep upstairs.' In this deplorable state he received from the Wesleys books and ghostly counsels. His tutor, more wisely, sent him a physician, and for seven weeks he laboured under a severe illness. It was, in his own language, 'a glorious visitation.' It gave him time and composure to make a written record and a penitent confession of his youthful sins; to examine the New Testament; to read Bishop Hall's Contemplations; and to seek by prayer for wisdom and for peace. The blessings thus invoked were not denied. 'The day-star,' he says, 'arose in my heart. This spirit of mourning was taken from me. For some time I could not avoid singing Psalms wherever I was, but my joy became gradually more settled. Thus were the days of my mourning ended.'

And thus also was ended his education. Before the completion of his twenty-first year, Whitfield returned to Gloucester; and such was the fame of his piety and talents, that Dr. Benson, the then Bishop of the Diocese, offered to dispense, in his favour, with the rule which forbade the ordination of Deacons at so unripe an age. The mental agitation which preceded his acceptance of this proposal, is described in these strange but graphic terms in one of his latest sermons.

'I never prayed against any corruption I had in my life, so much as I did against going into holy orders so soon as my friends were for having me go. Bishop Benson was pleased to honour me with peculiar friendship, so as to offer me preferment, or to do anything for me. My friends wanted me to mount the Church betimes. They wanted me to knock my head against the pulpit too young; but how some young men stand up here and there and preach I do not know. However it be to them, God knows how deep a concern entering into the ministry and preaching was to me. I have prayed a thousand times, till the sweat has dropped from my face like rain, that God of his infinite mercy would not let me enter the Church till he called me to and thrust me forth in his work. I remember once in Gloucester, I know the room—I look up to the window when I am there, and walk along the street—I know the window upon which I have laid prostrate. I said, Lord, I cannot go, I shall be puffed up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the Devil. Lord, do not let me go yet. I pleaded to be at Oxford two or three years more. I intended to make 150 sermons, and thought that I would set up with a good

stock in trade. I remember praying, wrestling, and striving with God. I said, I am undone. I am unfit to preach in thy great name. Send me not, Lord,—send me not yet. I wrote to all my friends in town and country to pray against the Bishop's solicitation, but they insisted I should go into orders before I was twenty-two. After all their solicitations, these words came into my mind, "Nothing shall pluck you out of my hands;" they came warm to my heart. Then, and not till then, I said, Lord, I *will* go; send me when thou wilt.' He was ordained accordingly; and 'when he Bishop laid his hands upon my head, my heart,' he says, 'was melted down, and I offered up my whole spirit, soul, and body.'

A man within whose bosom resides an oracle directing his steps in the language and with the authority of inspiration, had needs be thus self-devoted, in soul and body, to some honest purpose. If not, he will but too often mistake the voice of the Pythoness for that which issues from the sanctuary. But the uprightness and inflexible constancy of Whitfield's character rendered even its superstitions comparatively harmless; and the sortilege was ever in favour of some new effort to accomplish the single object for which he henceforward lived.

The next words which 'came to his soul with power' were, 'Speak out, Paul,' and never was injunction more strictly obeyed. 'Immediately,' he says, 'my heart was enlarged, and I preached on the Sunday morning to a very crowded audience with as much freedom as if I had been a preacher for some years. As I proceeded I perceived the fire kindled, till at last, though so young, and amidst a crowd of those who knew me in my infant childish days, I trust I was enabled to speak with some degree of gospel authority. Some few mocked, but most for the present seemed struck, and I have heard since that a complaint had been made to the Bishop that I drove fifteen mad by the first sermon. The worthy Prelate, as I am informed, wished that the madness might not be forgotten before next Sunday.'

Thus early conscious of his own rare powers, delighting in the exercise of them, charmed with the admiration which they excited, and exulting in the belief that he had been commissioned from on high to quicken a torpid generation into life, he was urged into exertions which, if not attested by irrefragable proofs, might appear incredible and fabulous. It was the statement of one who knew him well, and who was incapable of wilful exaggeration—and it is confirmed by his letters, his journals, and a whole cloud of witnesses—that, 'in the compass of a single week, and that for years, he spoke in general forty hours, and very many sixty, and that to thousands; and after his labours, instead of taking any rest, he was

engaged in offering up prayers and intercessions, with hymns and spiritual songs, as his manner was, in every house to which he was invited.'

Given, a preacher, who, during the passage of the sun through the ecliptic, addresses his audience every seventh day in two discourses of the dwarfish size to which sermons attain in this degenerate age, and multiply his efforts by forty, and you do not reach the measure of Whitfield's homiletical labours, during each of his next five and thirty years. Combine this with the fervour with which he habitually spoke, the want of all aids to the voice in the fields and the thoroughfares he frequented, and the toil of rendering himself distinctly audible to thousands and tens of thousands, and, considered merely as a physical phenomenon, the result is amongst the most curious of all well-authenticated marvels. If the time spent in travelling from place to place, and some brief intervals of repose and preparation be subtracted, his whole life may be said to have been consumed in the delivery of one continuous or scarcely interrupted sermon. Strange as is such an example of bodily and mental energy, still stranger is the power he possessed of fascinating the attention of hearers of every rank of life and of every variety of understanding. Not only were the loom, the forge, the plough, the collieries, and the workshops deserted at his approach, but the spell was acknowledged by Hume and Franklin—by Pulteney, Bolingbroke, and Chesterfield—by maids of honour and lords of the bedchamber. Such indeed was its force, that when the scandal could be concealed behind a well-adjusted curtain, 'e'en mitred "auditors" would nod the head.' Neither English reserve, nor the theological discrimination of the Scotch, nor the callous nerves of the slave-dealers of America, nor the stately self-possession of her aborigines, could resist the enchantment. Never was mortal man gifted with such an incapacity of fatiguing or of being fatigued.

It is impossible to award any similar praise to the Reverend Robert Philip, Whitfield's latest biographer. He has followed the steps of the great itinerant from the cradle to the grave, in a volume of nearly six hundred closely printed pages, compiled on the principle that nothing can be superfluous in the narrative of a great man's life which was of any real importance to the man himself, or to his associates. The chronicle so drawn up, illuminated by no eloquence or philosophy, human or divine, and arranged on no intelligible method, is a sore exercise for the memory and the patience of the reader. It records, without selection or forbearance, thirteen successive voyages across the Atlantic—pilgrimages incalculable in every part of the North American continent, from



Georgia to Boston — controversies with Wesley on predestination and perfection, and with the Bishops on still deeper mysteries — chapel buildings and subscriptions — preachings and the excitement which followed them — and characteristic sayings and uncharacteristic letters — meetings and partings — and every other incident, great and small, which has been preserved by the oral or written traditions of Whitfield's followers. His life still remains to be written by some one who shall bring to the task other qualifications than an honest zeal for his fame, and a cordial adoption of his opinions.

From the conflict with the enemies who had threatened her existence, the Church militant turned to resist the unwelcome ally who menaced her repose. Warburton led the van, and behind him many a mitred front scowled on the audacious innovator. Divested of the logomachies which chiefly engaged the attention of the disputants, the controversy between Whitfield and the Bishops lay in a narrow compass. It being mutually conceded that the virtues of the Christian life can result only from certain divine impulses, and that to lay a claim to this holy inspiration when its legitimate fruits are wanting, is a fatal delusion — he maintained, and they denied, that the person who is the subject of this sacred influence has within his own bosom an independent attestation of its reality. So abstruse a debate required the zest of some more pungent ingredients; and the polemics with whom Whitfield had to do, were not such sciolists in their calling as to be ignorant of the necessity of fastening upon him some epithet at once opprobrious and vague. While, therefore, milder spirits arraigned him as an *Enthusiast*, Warburton, with constitutional energy of invective, denounced him as a *Fanatic*. In vain he demanded a definition of these reproachful terms. To have fixed their meaning would have been to destroy their point. They afforded a solution at once compendious, obscure, and repulsive, of whatever was remarkable in his character, and have accompanied his name from that time to the present.

The currents of life had drifted Warburton on divinity as his profession, but his satirical propensities were too strong to yield even to the study of the Gospels. From them he might have discovered the injustice of his censure; for the real nature of religious fanaticism can be learnt with equal clearness from no other source. They tell of some men who compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, that, when made, they might train him up as a persecutor and a bigot; of some, who erected sepulchral monuments to the martyrs of a former age, while unsheathing the sword which was to augment their number; of some who would have called

down fire from heaven to punish the inhospitable city which rejected their Master; and of some who exhausted their bodies with fasting, and their minds with study, that they might with deeper emphasis curse the ignorant multitude. These all laboured under a mental disease, which, amongst fanatics of every generation, has assumed the same distinctive type. It consists in an unhallowed alliance of the morose and vindictive passions with devotional or religious excitement. Averting the mental eye from what is cheerful, affectionate, and animating in piety, the victims of this malady regard the sects opposed to them not as the children, but as the enemies of God; and while looking inward with melancholy alternations of self-complacency and self-reproach, learn to contemplate their brethren as their enemies, and Deity itself with but half-suppressed aversion. To connect the name of the kind-hearted George Whitfield with such a reproach as this! To call on the indolent of all future generations who should believe in Warburton, to associate the despised itinerant of his times with the Dominics and the Bonners of former ages! Truly the indignant prelate knew not what manner of spirit he was of. If ever philanthropy burned in the human heart with a pure and intense flame, embracing the whole family of man in the spirit of universal charity, it was in the heart of George Whitfield. His predestinarian speculations perplexed his mind, but could not check the expansion of his Christian feelings. 'He loved the world that hated him.' He had no preferences but in favour of the ignorant, the miserable, and the poor. In their cause he shrunk from no privation, and declined neither insult nor hostility. To such wrongs he opposed the weapons of an all-enduring meekness, and a love which would not be repulsed. The springs of his benevolence were inexhaustible, and could not choose but flow. Assisted it may have been by natural disposition, and by many external influences; but it ultimately reposed on the fixed persuasion that he was engaged in a sacred duty, the faithful discharge of which would be followed by an imperishable recompense. With whatever undigested subtleties his religious creed was encumbered, they could not hide from him, though they might obscure, the truth, that, between the virtues of this life and the rewards of a future state, the connexion is necessary and indissoluble. Referring this retributive dispensation exclusively to the Divine benevolence, his theology inculcated humility, while it inspired love, and fortitude, and hope. It taught him self-distrust, and reliance on a strength superior to his own; and instructed him in the mystery which reconciles the elevation and the purity of disinterested love with those lower motives of action which more immediately respect

the future advantage of the agent. Whatever else Whitfield may have been, a Fanatic, in the proper sense of that term, he assuredly was not.

The charge of Enthusiasm was so ambiguous, that it might, with equal propriety, be understood as conveying either commendation or reproach. Hope is the element in which all the great men of the world move and have their being. Engaged in arduous and lofty designs, they must, to a certain extent, live in an imaginary world, and reanimate their exhausted strength with ideal prospects of the success which is to repay their labours. But, like every other emotion, Hope, when long indulged, yields but a precarious obedience to the reasoning powers; and Reason herself, even when most enlightened, will not seldom make a voluntary abdication of her sovereignty in favour of this her so powerful minister; — surrendering up to the guidance of bright and ardent anticipations, a mind whose lofty aims cannot be realised by obedience to her own sober counsels. For in 'this little state of man' the passions must be the free subjects, not the slaves of the Reason; and while they obey her precepts, should impart to her some of their own spirit, warmth, and energy. It is, however, essential to a well-constituted nature, that the subordination of the lower to the superior faculties, though thus occasionally relaxed, should be habitually maintained. Used with due abstinence, Hope acts as an healthful tonic; intemperately indulged, as an enervating opiate. The visions of future triumph, which at first animate exertion, if dwelt upon too intently, will usurp the place of the stern reality, and noble objects will be contemplated, not for their own inherent worth, but on account of the day-dreams they engender. Thus, Hope aided by Imagination makes one man a hero, another a somnambulist, and a third a lunatic; while it renders them all Enthusiasts. And thus are classed together, under one generic term, characters wide asunder as the poles, and standing at the top and at the bottom of the scale of human intellect. The same epithet is applied indifferently to Francis Bacon and to Emanuel Swedenborg.

Religious men are, for obvious reasons, more subject than others to Enthusiasm, both in its invigorating and in its morbid forms. They are aware that there is about their path and about their bed a real presence, which yet no sense attests. They revere a spiritual inmate of the soul, of whom they have no definite consciousness. They live in communion with one, whose nature is chiefly defined by negatives. They are engaged in duties which can be performed acceptably only at the bidding of the deepest affections. They rest their faith on prophetic and miraculous suspensions, in times

past, of the usual course of nature; and derive their hopes and fears from the dim shadows cast by things eternal on the troubled mirror of this transient scene. What wonder if, under the incumbent weight of such thoughts as these, the course of active virtue be too often arrested; or if a religious romance sometimes takes the place of contemplative piety; or if the fictitious gradually supersedes the real; or if a world of dreams, a system of opinions, and a code of morals, which religion disavows, occasionally shed their narcotic influence over a spirit excited and oppressed by the shapeless forms and the fearful powers with which it is conversant?

Both in the more and in the less favourable sense of the expression Whitfield was an Enthusiast. The thralldom of the active to the meditative powers was indeed abhorrent from his nature; but he was unable to maintain a just equilibrium between them. His life was one protracted calenture; and the mental fever discoloured and distorted the objects of his pursuits. Without intellectual discipline or sound learning, he confounded his narrow range of elementary topics with the comprehensive scheme and science of divinity. Leaping over the state of pupilage, he became at once a teacher and a dogmatist. The lessons which he never drew from books were never taught him by living men. He allowed himself no leisure for social intercourse with his superiors, or with his equals, but underwent the debilitating effects of conversing, almost exclusively, with those who sat as disciples at his feet. Their homage, and the impetuous tumult of his career, left him but superficially acquainted with himself. Unsuspicious of his own ignorance, and exposed to flattery far more intoxicating than the acclamations of the theatre, he laid the foundations of a new religious system with less of profound thought, and in a greater penury of theological research, than had ever fallen to the lot of a reformer or heresiarch before. The want of learning was concealed under the dazzling veil of popular eloquence, and supplied by the assurance of Divine illumination; and the spiritual influence on which he thus relied, would, if real, have been little else than a continually recurring miracle. It was not a power like that which acts throughout the material world—the unseen and inaudible source of life, sustaining, cementing, and invigorating all things, hiding itself from the heedless beneath the subordinate agency it employs, and disclosed to the thoughtful by its prolific and plastic energies. The access of the Sacred presence, which Whitfield acknowledged, was perceptible by an inward consciousness, and was not merely different, but distinguishable, from the movements of that intellectual and sensitive mechanism of his own nature, by



means of which it operated. He discerned it not only in the growth of the active and passive virtues, and in progressive strength and wisdom and peace, but in sudden impulses which visited his bosom, and unexpected suggestions which directed his path. A truth of all others the most consolatory and the most awful, was thus degraded almost to a level with superstitions, which, in their naked form, no man would have more vehemently disclaimed; and the great mystery which blends together the human and the divine in the Christian dispensation, lost much of its sublime character, and with it much of its salutary influence.

It was indeed impossible that a mind feeding upon such visions as he invited and cherished should entirely escape their practical mischief. He would have rejected with horror the impious dream that the indwelling Deity would absolve him from any obligation of justice, mercy, or truth. Yet he could persuade himself that he enjoyed a dispensation from the duty of canonical obedience to his ecclesiastical superiors. His revolt against the authority of the Church of which he was a presbyter, is at once avowed and defended by his latest biographer. 'If,' he says, 'a bishop did good, or allowed good to be done, Whitfield venerated him and his office too; but he despised both whenever they were hostile to truth or zeal — I have no objection to say, whenever they were hostile to his own sentiments and measures. What honest man would respect an unjust judge, or an ignorant physician, because of their professional titles? It is high time to put an end to this nonsense.'

Mr. Philip's boast is not, or at least should not be, that he is well found in the principles of casuistry. He is no *Ductor Dubitantium*, but a spiritual pugilist, who uses his pen as a cudgel. Whatever may be the value of hard words, they are not sufficient to adjust such a question as this. Under sanctions of the most awful solemnity, Whitfield had bound himself to submit to the lawful commands of his bishop. His 'measures' being opposed to the law ecclesiastical, were interdicted by his diocesan; but, his 'sentiments' telling him that he was right, and the bishop wrong, the vow of obedience was, it seems, cancelled. If so, it was but an impious mockery to make, or to receive, it. If it be really 'nonsense' to respect so sacred an engagement, then is there less sound sense than has usually been supposed in good faith and plain dealing. Even on the hazardous assumption that the allegiance voluntarily assumed by the clergy of the Anglican church is dissoluble at the pleasure of the inferior party, it is at least evident that Whitfield was bound to abandon the advantages, when he repudiated the duties, of the relation in which he stood to his bishop. But, 'despising' the episcopal office, he still kept his

station in the episcopal church; and, if he had no share in her emoluments, continued at least to enjoy the rank, the worship, the influence, and the privileges which attend her ministers. In the midst of his revolt he performed her offices, and ministered in her temples, as often as opportunity offered. It was the dishonest proceeding of a good man bewildered by dreams of the special guidance of a Divine Monitor. The apology of his biographer is the error of a religious man led away by a sectarian spirit.

The sinister influence of Whitfield's imagination on his opinions, and, through them, on his conduct, may be illustrated by another example. He not only became the purchaser of slaves, but condemned the restriction which at that time forbade their introduction into Georgia. There is extant, in his handwriting, an inventory of the effects at the Orphan House, in that province, in which these miserable captives take their place between the cattle and the carts. 'Blessed be God,' he exclaimed, 'for the increase of the negroes. I entirely approve of reducing the Orphan House as low as possible, and I am determined to take no more than the plantation will maintain till I can buy more negroes.' It is true that it was only as founder of this asylum for destitute children that he made these purchases; and true also, that in these wretched bondsmen he recognised immortal beings for whose eternal welfare he laboured; and it is further true that the morality of his age was lax on this subject. But the American Quakers were already bearing testimony against the guilt of slavery and the slave-trade; and even had they been silent, so eminent a teacher of Christianity as Whitfield could not, without just censure, have so far descended from scriptural to conventional virtue.

To measure such a man as George Whitfield by the standards of refined society might seem a very strange, if not a ludicrous attempt. Yet, as Mr. Philip repeatedly, and with emphasis, ascribes to him the character of a 'gentleman,' it must be stated that he was guilty of high crimes and misdemeanours against the laws of that aristocratic commonwealth in which the assertion of social equality, and the nice observance of the privileges of sex and rank, are so curiously harmonised. Such was his want of animal courage, that in the vigour of his days he could tamely acquiesce in a severe personal chastisement; and fly to the hold of his vessel for safety at the prospect of an approaching sea-fight. Such his failure in self-respect, that a tone of awkward adulation distinguishes nearly all his letters to the ladies of high degree who partook and graced his triumph. But his capital offence against the code of manners was the absence of that pudicity which shrinks from exposing to public gaze the deepest emotions of the heart.

In Journals originally divulged, and at last published, by himself, and, throughout his voluminous correspondence, he is 'naked and is not ashamed.' Some very coarse elements must have entered into the composition of a man who could thus scatter abroad disclosures of the secret communings of his spirit with his Maker.

Akin to this fault is his seeming unconsciousness of the oppressive majesty of the topics with which he was habitually occupied. The seraph in the prophetic vision was arrayed with wings, of which some were given to urge his flight, and others to cover his face. Vigorous as were the pinions with which Whitfield moved, he appears to have been unprovided with those beneath which his eyes should have shrunk from too familiar a contemplation of the ineffable glory. Where prophets and apostles 'stood trembling,' he is at his ease; where they adored, he declaims. This is, indeed, one of the besetting sins of licentiates in divinity. But few ever moved among the infinitudes and eternities of invisible things with less embarrassment or with less of silent awe. Illustrations might be drawn from every part of his writings, but hardly without committing the irreverence we condemn.

To the lighter graces of taste and fancy Whitfield had no pretension. He wandered from shore to shore unobservant of the wonders of art and nature, and of the strange varieties of men and manners which solicited his notice. In sermons in which no resource within his reach is neglected, there is scarcely a trace to be found of such objects having met his eye or arrested his attention. The poetry of the inspired volume awakens in him no corresponding raptures; and the rhythmical quotations which overspread his letters never rise above the *cantilena* of the tabernacle. In polite literature, in physical and moral science, he never advanced much beyond the standard of the grammar-school of St. Mary de Crypt. Even as a theologian, he has no claims to erudition. He appears to have had no Hebrew and little Greek, and to have studied neither ecclesiastical antiquity nor the great divines of modern times. His reading seems to have been confined to a few, and those not the most considerable, of the works of the later nonconformists. Neither is it possible to assign him a place among profound or original thinkers. He was, in fact, almost an uneducated man; and the powers of his mind were never applied, and perhaps could not have been applied successfully, either to the acquisition of abstruse knowledge, or to the enlargement of its boundaries.

'Let the name of George Whitfield perish if God be glorified,' was his own ardent and sincere exclamation. His disciples will hardly acquiesce in their teacher's self-abasement. They will per-

haps resent, as injurious to him and to their cause, these imputations of enthusiasm, of personal timidity, of irreverence and coarseness of mind, of ignorance and of a mediocrity or a total absence of the powers of fancy, invention, and research. But the apotheosis of saints is no less idolatrous than that of heroes; and they have not imbibed Whitfield's spirit who cannot brook to be told that he had his share of the faults and infirmities which no man more solemnly ascribed to the whole human race.

Such, however, was his energy and self-devotion, that even the defects of his character were rendered subservient to the one end for which he lived. From the days of the Apostles to our own, history records the career of no man who, with a less alloy of motives terminating in self, or of passions breaking loose from the control of reason, concentrated all the faculties of his soul, with intensity and perseverance, for the accomplishment of one great design. He belonged to that rare variety of the human species of which it has been said that the liberties of mankind depend on their inability to combine in erecting an universal monarchy. With nerves incapable of fatigue, and a confidence in himself, which no authority, neglect, or opposition could abate, opposing an impenetrable skin to all the missiles of scorn and contumely, and yet exquisitely sensitive to the affection which cheered, and the applause which rewarded his labours; unembarrassed either by the learning which reveals difficulties, or by the meditative powers which suggest doubts; with an insatiable thirst for active occupation, and an unhesitating faith in whatever cause he undertook; he might have been one of the most dangerous enemies of the peace and happiness of the world, if powers so formidable in their possible abuse had not been directed to a beneficent end. Judged by the wisdom which is of the earth, earthy, Whitfield would be pronounced a man whose energy ministered to a vulgar ambition, of which the triumph over his ecclesiastical superiors, and the admiration of unlettered multitudes, were the object and the recompense. Estimated by those whose religious opinions and observances are derived from him by hereditary descent, he is nothing less than an apostle, inspired in the latter ages of the Church to purify her faith, and to reform her morals. A more impartial survey of his life and writings may suggest the conclusion, that the homage of admiring crowds, and the blandishments of courtly dames, were neither unwelcome nor unsolicited; that a hierarchy subdued to inaction, if not to silence, gratified his self-esteem; and that, when standing on what he delighted to call his 'throne,' the current of devout and holy thoughts was not uncontaminated by the admixture of some human exultation. But ill betide him who delights in the too curious dissection of the motives of others, or even of



his own. Such anatomists breathe an impure air, and unconsciously contract a sickly mental habit. Whitfield was a great and a holy man; among the foremost of the heroes of philanthropy; and as a preacher without a superior or a rival.

If eloquence be justly defined by the emotions it excites, or by the activity it quickens, the greatest orator of our times was he who first announced the victory of Waterloo,—if that station be not rather due to the learned President of the College of Physicians, who daily makes the ears to tingle of those who listen to his prognostics. But the converse of the rule may be more readily admitted, and we may confidently exclude from the list of eloquent speakers him whose audience is impassive whilst he addresses them, and inactive afterwards. Every seventh day a great company of preachers raise their voices in the land to detect our sins, to explain our duty, to admonish, to alarm, and so console. Compare the prodigious extent of this apparatus with its perceptible results, and, inestimable as they are, who will deny that they disappoint the hopes which, antecedently to experience, the least sanguine would have indulged? The preacher has, indeed, no novelties to communicate. His path has been trodden hard and dry by constant use; yet he speaks as an ambassador from heaven, and his hearers are frail, sorrowing, perplexed, and dying men. The highest interests of both are at stake. The preacher's eye rests on his manuscript; the hearer's turns to the clock; the half-hour glass runs out its sand; and the portals close on well-dressed groups of critics, looking for all the world as if just dismissed from a lecture on the tertiary strata.

Taking his stand on some rising knoll, his tall and graceful figure dressed with elaborate propriety, and composed into an easy and commanding attitude, Whitfield's 'clear blue eye' ranged over thousands, and tens of thousands, drawn up in close files on the plain below, or clustering into masses on every adjacent eminence. A 'rabble rout' hung on the skirts of the mighty host; and the feelings of the devout were disturbed by the scurril jests of the illiterate, and the cold sarcasms of the more polished spectators of their worship. But the rich and varied tones of a voice of unequalled depth and compass quickly silenced every ruder sound,—as in rapid succession its ever-changing melodies passed from the calm of simple narrative, to the measured distinctness of argument, to the vehemence of reproof, and the pathos of heavenly consolation. 'Sometimes the preacher wept exceedingly, stamped loudly and passionately, and was frequently so overcome that for a few seconds one would suspect he could never recover, and, when he did, nature required some little time to compose herself.' In words originally applied to one of the first German Reformers.—

*vividus vultus, vividi oculi, vivida manus, denique omnia vivida.* The agitated assembly caught the passions of the speaker, and exulted, wept, or trembled at his bidding. He stood before them, in popular belief, a persecuted man, spurned and rejected by lordly prelates, yet still a presbyter of the Church, and clothed with her authority;—his meek and lowly demeanour chastened and elevated by the conscious grandeur of the apostolic succession. The thoughtful gazed earnestly on a scene of solemn interest, pregnant with some strange and enduring influence on the future condition of mankind. But the wise and the simple alike yielded to the enchantment; and the thronging multitude gave utterance to their emotions in every form in which nature seeks relief from feelings too strong for mastery.

Whitfield had cultivated the histrionic art to a perfection which has rarely been obtained, even by the most eminent of those who have trodden the stage in sock or buskin. Foote and Garrick were his frequent hearers, and brought away with them the characteristic and very just remark, that 'his oratory was not at its full height until he had repeated a discourse forty times.' The transient delirium of Franklin, (attested by the surrender on one occasion of all the contents of his purse at a 'charity sermon,' and by a Quaker's refusal to lend more to a man who had lost his wits,) did not prevent his investigating the causes of this unwonted excitement. 'I came,' he says, 'by hearing him often, to distinguish between sermons newly composed and those he had preached often in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetition, that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of the voice was so perfectly timed, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse,—a pleasure of much the same kind as that received from an excellent piece of music.'

The basis of the singular dominion which was thus exercised by Whitfield during a period equal to that assigned by ordinary calculation for the continuance of human life, would repay a more careful investigation than we have space or leisure to attempt. Amongst subordinate influences, the faintest of all is that which may have been occasionally exercised over the more refined members of his congregations by the romantic scenery in which they assembled. The tears shaping 'white gutters down the black faces of the colliers, black as they came out of the coal-pits,' were certainly not shed under any overwhelming sense of the picturesque, but the preacher himself felt and courted this excitement. 'The open firmament above me, the prospect of the adjacent fields,' 'to which sometimes was added the solemnity' 'of the approaching evening,' was, he says, 'almost too much for me.' But a far more

effectual resource was found in the art of diverting into a new and unexpected channel, the excited feelings of a multitude already brought together for purposes the most strangely contrasted to his own. Journeying to Wales, he passes over Hampton Common, and finds himself surrounded by twelve thousand people collected to see a man hung in chains, and an extempore pulpit is immediately provided within sight of this deplorable object. On another similar occasion, the wretched culprit was permitted to steal an hour from the eternity before him, while listening, or seeming to listen, to a sermon delivered by Whitfield to himself, and to the spectators of his approaching doom. He reaches Basingstoke, when the inhabitants are engaged in all the festivities of a country fair, and thus records the use he made of so tempting an opportunity. 'As I passed on horseback I saw the stage, and as I rode further I met divers coming to the revel, which affected me so much, that I had no rest in my spirit, and therefore having asked counsel of God, and perceiving an unusual warmth and power enter my soul, though I was gone above a mile, I could not bear to see so many dear souls for whom Christ had died ready to perish, and no minister or magistrate interpose; upon this, I told my dear fellow-travellers that I was resolved to follow the example of Howell Harris in Wales, and bear my testimony against such lying vanities, let the consequences to my own private person be what they would. They immediately assenting, I rode back to the town, got upon the stage erected for the wrestlers, and began to show them the error of their ways.'

The often-told tale of Whitfield's controversy with the Merry-Andrew at Moorfields, still more curiously illustrates the skill and intrepidity with which he contrived to divert to his own ends an excitement running at high tide in the opposite direction. The following is an extract from his own narrative of the encounter.

'For many years, from one end of Moorfields to the other, booths of all kinds have been erected for mountebanks, players, puppet-shows, and such like. With a heart bleeding with compassion for so many thousands led captive by the devil at his will, on Whit-Monday, at six o'clock in the morning, attended by a large congregation of praying people, I ventured to lift up a standard amongst them, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Perhaps there were about ten thousand in waiting, not for me, but for Satan's instruments to amuse them. Glad was I to find that I had for once, as it were, got the start of the devil. I mounted my field pulpit; almost all flocked immediately around it; I preached on these words—"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," &c. They gazed, they listened, they wept, and I believe that many felt themselves stung with the deep conviction for their past sins. All was hushed and solemn. Being thus encouraged, I ventured out



again at noon. The whole fields seemed, in a bad sense of the word, all white, ready not for the Redeemer's, but for Beelzebub's harvest. All his agents were in full motion. Drummers, trumpeters, Merry-Andrews, masters of puppet-shows, exhibitions of wild beasts, players, &c. &c. all busy in entertaining their respective auditors. I suppose there could not be less than twenty or thirty thousand people. My pulpit was fixed on the opposite side, and immediately, to their great mortification, they found the number of their attendants sadly lessened. Judging that, like St. Paul, I should now be called, as it were, to fight with beasts at Ephesus, I preached from these words, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." You may easily guess that there was some noise among the craftsmen, and that I was honoured with having a few stones, dirt, rotten eggs, and pieces of dead cats thrown at me, whilst engaged in calling them from their favourite but lying vanities. My soul was indeed among lions, but far the greatest part of my congregation, which was very large, seemed for a while turned into lambs. This Satan could not brook. One of his choicest servants was exhibiting, trumpeting on a large stage, but as soon as the people saw me in my black robes and my pulpit, I think all to a man left him and ran to me. For a while I was enabled to lift up my voice like a trumpet, and many heard the joyful sound. God's people kept praying, and the enemy's agents made a kind of roaring at some distance from our camp. At length they approached near, and the Merry-Andrew got up on a man's shoulders, and, advancing near the pulpit, attempted to slash me with a long heavy whip several times, but always with the violence of his motion tumbled down. I think I continued in praying, preaching, and singing (for the noise was too great to preach) for about three hours. We then retired to the Tabernacle, with my pockets full of notes from persons brought under concern, and read them amidst the praises and spiritual acclamations of thousands. Three hundred and fifty awakened souls were received in one day, and I believe the number of notes exceeded a thousand.'

The propensity to mirth which, in common with all men of robust mental constitution, Whitfield possessed in an unusual degree, was, like everything else belonging to him, compelled to minister to the interest and success of his preaching; but, however much his pleasantries may attest the alacrity of his mind, it would be difficult to assign them any other praise. Oscillating in spirit as well as in body, between Drury Lane and the Tabernacle, Shuter, the comedian, attended in Tottenham Court Road during the run of his successful performance of the character of Ramble, and was greeted with the following apostrophe, — 'and thou, poor Ramble, who hast so long rambled from Him, come thou also.



Oh! end thy ramblings, and come to Jesus.' The preacher in this instance descended not a little below the level of the player.

In the eighteenth century the crown of martyrdom was a prize for which Roman Catholics alone were permitted to contend, and Whitfield was unable to gain the influence which he would have derived from the stake, from a prison, or a confiscation. Conscious, however, of the importance of such sufferings, he persuaded himself, and desired to convince the world, that he had to endure them. The Bishops were persecutors, because they repelled with some acrimony his attacks on their authority and reputation. The mob were persecutors, because they pelted a man who insisted on their hearing him preach when they wanted to see a bear dance, or a conjuror eat fire. A magistrate was a persecutor, because he summoned him to appear on an unfounded charge, and then dismissed him on his own recognizance. He gloried with better reason in the contemptuous language with which he was assailed, even by the more decorous of his opponents, and in the ribaldries of Foote and Bickerstaff. He would gladly have partaken of the doom of Rogers and Ridley, if his times had permitted, and his cause required it; but the fires of Smithfield were put out, and the exasperated Momus of the fair, with his long whip, alone remained to do the appropriate honours of the feast of St. Bartholomew.

There are extant seventy-five of the sermons by which Whitfield agitated nations, and the more remote influence of which is still distinctly to be traced, in the popular divinity and in the national character of Great Britain and of the United States. They have, however, fallen into neglect; for to win permanent acceptance for a book, into which the principles of life were not infused by its author, is a miracle which not even the zeal of religious proselytes can accomplish. Yet, inferior as were his inventive to his histrionic powers, Whitfield is entitled to a place among theological writers; which, if it cannot challenge admiration, may at least excite and reward curiosity. Many, and those by far the worst, of his discourses bear the marks of careful preparation. Take at hazard a sermon of one of the preachers usually distinguished as evangelical, add a little to its length, and subtract a great deal from its point and polish, and you have one of his more elaborate performances;—common-place topics discussed in a common-place way; a respectable mediocrity of thought and style; endless variations on one or two cardinal truths;—in short, the task of a clerical Saturday evening, executed with piety, good sense, and exceeding sedateness. But open one of that series of Whitfield's sermons which bears the stamp of having been conceived and uttered at the same moment, and imagine it recited to myriads of

eager listeners with every charm of voice and gesture, and the secret of his unrivalled fascination is at least partially disclosed. He places himself on terms of intimacy and unreserved confidence with you, and makes it almost as difficult to decline the invitation to his familiar talk as if Montaigne himself had issued it. The egotism is amusing, affectionate, and warm-hearted; with just that slight infusion of self-importance without which it would pass for affectation. In this art of rhetoric, personification holds the first place; and the *prosopopœia* is so managed as to quicken abstractions into life and to give them individuality and distinctness without the use of any of those spasmodic and distorted images which obey the incantations of vulgar rhetoricians. Every trace of study and contrivance is obliterated by the hearty earnestness which pervades each successive period, and by the vernacular and homely idioms in which his meaning is conveyed. The recollection of William Cobbett will obtrude itself on the reader of these discourses, though the remembrance of the sturdy athlete of the 'Political Register,' with his sophistry and his sarcasm, his drollery and his irascible vigour, sorely disturbs the sacred emotions which it was the one object of the preacher to awaken. And it is in this grandeur and singleness of purpose that the charm of Whitfield's preaching seems really to have consisted. You feel that you have to do with a man who lived and spoke, and who would gladly have died, to deter his hearers from the path of destruction, and to guide them to holiness and to peace. His gossiping stories and dramatic forms of speech are never employed to dissipate the awful emotions which he proposes to excite. Conscience is not permitted to find an intoxicating draught in spiritual excitement, or a narcotic in glowing imagery. Guilt and its punishment, pardon and spotless purity, death and an eternal existence, stand out in bold relief on every page. From these the eye of the teacher is never withdrawn, and to these the attention of the hearer is riveted. All that is poetic, grotesque, or rapturous is employed to deepen these impressions, and is dismissed as soon as that design is answered. Deficient in learning, meagre in thought, and redundant in language as are these discourses, they yet fulfil the one great condition of genuine eloquence. They propagate their own kindly warmth, and leave their stings behind them.

The enumeration of the sources of Whitfield's power is still essentially defective. Neither energy, nor eloquence, nor histrionic talents, nor any artifices of style, nor the most genuine sincerity and self-devotedness, nor all these united, would have enabled him to mould the religious character of millions in his own and future generations. The secret lies deeper, though not very deep. It

consisted in the nature of the theology he taught — in its perfect simplicity and universal application. His thirty or forty thousand sermons were but so many variations on two key-notes. Man is guilty, and may obtain forgiveness; he is immortal, and must ripen here for endless weal or woe hereafter. Expanded into innumerable forms, and diversified by infinite varieties of illustrations, these two cardinal principles were ever in his heart and on his tongue. Let who would invoke poetry to embellish the Christian system, or philosophy to penetrate its depths, from his lips it was delivered as an awful and urgent summons to repent, to believe, and to obey. To give orders on ship-board in a tempest in the cadences of Haydn, or in all the categories of Aristotle, would have seemed to him not a whit more preposterous than to divert his hearers from their danger and their refuge, their duties and their hopes, to any topics more trivial or more abstruse. In fine, he was thoroughly and continually in earnest, and, therefore, possessed that tension of the soul which admitted neither of lassitude nor relaxation. Few and familiar as were the topics to which he was confined, his was that state of mind in which alone eloquence, properly so called, can be born, and a moral and intellectual sovereignty acquired.

The effects of Whitfield's labours on succeeding times have been thrown into the shade by the more brilliant fortunes of the Ecclesiastical Dynasty of which Wesley was at once the founder, the lawgiver, and the head. Yet a large proportion of the American Churches, and that great body of the Church of England, which, assuming the title of 'Evangelical,' has been refused that of 'Orthodox,' may trace back their spiritual genealogy by regular descent from him. It appears, indeed, that there are among them some who, for having disavowed this ancestry, have brought themselves within the swing of Mr. Philip's club. To rescue them, if it were possible, from the bruises which they have provoked, would be to arrest the legitimate march of penal justice. The consanguinity is attested by historical records, and by the strongest family resemblance. The quarterings of Whitfield are entitled to a conspicuous place in the 'Evangelical' scutcheon; and they who bear it are not wise in being ashamed of the blazonry.

If the section of the Church of England which usually bears that title, be properly so distinguished, there can be no impropriety in designating as her four Evangelists John Newton, Thomas Scott, Joseph Milner, and Henry Venn. Newton held himself forth, and was celebrated by others, as the great living example of the regenerating efficacy of the principles of his school. Scott was their interpreter of Holy Scripture, Milner their ecclesiastical historian,

Venn their systematic teacher of the whole Christian institutes. In some respects these men closely resembled each other. A certain sturdiness of character and intrepidity of mind belonged to them all. They all possessed that free, flowing, and inartificial style in which a full man pours out the mature results of his studies and meditations. Each of them was, to a considerable extent, self-educated. As soon as he had made good any position in theology, each of them was accustomed to retain it firmly as a post in advance, or basis for further conquests of the same kind. And, after effecting many such conquests, they all reached and adhered to that system of divinity, which has so long arrested the corruption, and prevented the fall of our Elizabethan church economy. But though in contact at these points, they were directly antithetical to each other at many more.

In the year 1736 John Newton, then a boy in his twelfth year, commenced a seafaring life in a merchant vessel under the command of his father, a master mariner. His mother was then dead. She had given much religious instruction to her son, and had bequeathed to him the inheritance of many blessings, and of many prayers. These maternal cares yielded at length an abundant harvest; but their immediate fruits were harsh and premature. 'I took up,' he says, 'and laid aside a religious profession, three or four times before I was sixteen years old. I spent the greater part of every day in reading the Scriptures, in meditation, and in prayer. I fasted often, I even abstained from animal food for three months. I would hardly answer a question, for fear of speaking an idle word.'

From this state of mind, which he afterwards condemned as 'gloomy, stupid, unsociable, and useless,' Newton passed by an easy transition to scepticism. The faith of the young ascetic was overthrown by a stray volume of the 'Characteristics.' By a second and equally natural revolution the 'Rhapsodies' of Shaftsbury made way for other raptures of a more sublunary kind. As he journeyed to join his ship in the Thames, Newton formed an acquaintance with Mary Catlett, a Kentish maiden in her fourteenth year, for whose fair sake he abandoned his voyage, and the prospects it held out to him of an advantageous settlement in the West Indies. 'The world' was once 'well lost for love,' and at the same shrine the sailor boy sacrificed the management of a plantation in Jamaica. He received, in return, a romance, composed by Hope and embellished by Imagination, of a minority to be passed by himself and Mary Catlett on the same side of the broad Atlantic. Relentless fate destroyed the fiction and postponed their union until Newton had consumed seven dark and dismal years in



frequent and protracted exiles. 'During the whole of that time, he assures us, 'she was never absent for a single hour from his waking thoughts.' When occasionally resident in England, in the brief intervals of these early voyages, he performed sometimes twice, and always once, in each week, a pilgrimage of many miles to Shooter's Hill, there to gaze, not indeed on the house in which she dwelt, for that was still far away, but on the country towards which her eyes might perhaps be directed at the same moment!

Before the close of his septennial banishment our nautical Oroondates made one visit to the actual abode of the enchantress, when, in obedience to the spell, he again permitted his ship to put to sea without him. The penalty was immediate and severe. On reaching the port at which he ought to have embarked, he was pressed into the King's service, and sent on board the 'Harwich,' a ship of war then under sailing orders for the East Indies. Even this disaster soon assumed a comparatively smiling aspect. Struck with Newton's intelligence and address, his captain rated him on the ship's books as a midshipman, and thus laid open to him the path to preferment, and perhaps to martial renown. But his heart was with his idol. In the hope of another interview with her he effected his escape, and on his recapture was reduced to the rank of a common seaman. It was with a fierce resentment that he surrendered himself up to this degradation. 'I was,' he says, 'as miserable on all hands as could well be imagined.' 'My heart was filled with the most excruciating passions, eager desires, bitter rage, and black despair. Every hour exposed me to some new insult and hardship, with no hope of relief or mitigation. Whether I looked inward or outward I could perceive nothing but darkness and misery. I kept my eyes fixed upon the English shore, till, the ship's distance increasing, it insensibly disappeared, and when I could see it no longer I was tempted to throw myself into the sea, which, according to the wicked system I had adopted, would put an end to my sorrows at once.'

The wholesome discipline of His Majesty's ship 'Harwich,' however deeply abhorred by Newton, seems not to have been altogether unprofitable to him. He had acquired a certain respect for his own good name, but his conduct was such that he was readily permitted to exchange into a merchant ship, which they found lying at Madeira, on her way to the coast of Africa. 'While passing from one ship to the other, one reason why he rejoiced in the change (such is his own statement) was, that he might now be as abandoned as he pleased without any controversy; and from this time,' he says, 'I was exceedingly vile indeed, little, if anything, short of that

animated description of an almost irrecoverable state, which we have in 2 Peter, ii. 14.'

On his arrival on the Gold Coast, Newton became the overseer of one of those depôts of slaves which were then, as now, maintained at the mouths of the great African rivers, for the immediate and cheap supply of that article of commerce to the traders resorting thither. But he sank into a bondage only less deplorable than that of his captives. The power of his master and of his master's concubine over him was absolute, and their tyranny intolerable. Sick and despised, half naked, and half starved, he dragged out a wretched existence, feeding on fish, which he could not catch without extreme peril, and which, when caught, he was unable to dress, and often exposed without shelter in the rainy season, during forty successive hours, to the inclemency of that fearful climate. As he traversed the shore from one pestilential estuary to another, the unhappy outcast would have been as destitute of solace from within as from without, had it not happened that a copy of Barrow's Euclid had stuck by him in all his wanderings, and, while he traced the diagrams on the sand, and revolved the demonstration, his sorrows took a temporary flight.

Better, or, at least, less painful days arrived. Newton was transferred to another master, who admitted him to a share in his slave factory. 'And now,' he says, 'I was decently clothed and lived in plenty, business flourished, and our employer was satisfied, and here I began to be wretch enough to think myself happy. In the language of the country, the white man was growing black,'—that is, he was learning to contract and to satiate his desires within the narrow range of those sensual gratifications which lay at his command. From such happiness he was opportunely rescued by the appearance off the coast of a ship from Liverpool, the owner of which, Mr. Annesty, a friend of his family, had directed the master to inquire for him among the slave-traders in those parts, and, if possible, to effect his deliverance. Reluctantly, and not without the practice by the master of some cajolery, Newton was persuaded to return home, and, after incurring the perils of the sea in their utmost terrors, he reached the North of Ireland in the year 1748.

This he regards as the epoch of his reformation, and as the commencement of the happier portion of his life. In a ship, with the command of which he was entrusted by Mr. Annesty, he made four slave-trading voyages to the coast of Africa. After the completion of the first voyage, he married Mary Catlett. After the completion of the fourth, he was compelled by a dangerous illness to exchange his seafaring pursuits for the office of a landing waiter in the customs at Liverpool, for which also he was indebted to the zealous and persevering friendship of Mr. Annesty.

A still more momentous change was at hand. It had been the cherished hope of Newton's pious mother that he might become a faithful minister of the Gospel, and many circumstances concurred to bring about the full, though tardy, accomplishment of her prayer. However dissolute and profane he had been in his passage from youth to manhood, the impressions of her devout cares for him had never been wholly obliterated from his mind; and he had been fortunate in his childhood in a schoolmaster of the true Busby breed, from whose lips and vigorous right arm he had received other and more severe lessons, which he never had entirely forgotten. To that inflexible pedagogue he was indebted for his soothing intercourse with Euclid on the sea-shore in Africa, and for the company of Horace, of Livy, of Erasmus, and of Casimir on his subsequent voyages to the same coast. To his mother he owed a taste for the Bible, and for books of devotion, which in due time expelled the pagan poets from his cabin. Old ocean probably never before or since floated such another slave ship. On board of her, indeed, were to be seen all the ordinary phenomena. Packed together like herrings, stifled, sick, and broken-hearted, the negroes in that aquatic Pandemonium died after making futile attempts at insurrection. But, separated by a single plank from his victims, the voice of their gaoler might be heard, day by day, conducting the prayers of his ship's company, singing a devout imitation of his own, of the verses of Propertius ('tu mihi curarum requies,' &c.), and, as he assures us, experiencing on his last voyage to Guinea 'sweeter and more frequent hours of divine communion' than he had ever elsewhere known.

From these devotional exercises, Newton passed into much religious society in the West Indies, and in what was then British North America. There he became acquainted with George Whitfield, 'whose ministry,' he says, 'was exceedingly useful to him.' Still more useful were his leisure, and his solitary studies, at Liverpool. In the custom-house, at that town, he made such progress in Hebrew and in Greek, as to be able to read the originals of the Holy Scriptures, and, if we can rely on his own assurance, he there became acquainted 'with the best writers in divinity, in Latin, French, and English.' If Hooker was of the number of those 'best writers,' he found a refractory pupil in John Newton. He became an absolute latitudinarian on all points of ecclesiastical polity. After making 'some small attempts' as a Nonconformist, 'in a way of preaching and expounding,' he was much disposed to join the Protestant Dissenters altogether. He esteemed it a matter of very little, if of any, importance, with what outward ceremonial he might officiate, or in what Christian

society. His one solicitude was to find 'a public opportunity to testify the riches of Divine grace, thinking that he was, above most living, a fit person to proclaim that faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save the chief of sinners.'

After some delay, he was enabled to gratify this desire by the counsels, and by the united influence, of Richard Cecil, of the Earl of Dartmouth, and of Young, the author of the 'Night Thoughts.' They not only induced him to seek, but enabled him to find, admission as a pastor in the episcopal fold. In his thirty-ninth year he became at once a deacon of the Church of England, and curate of the parish and town of Olney, in Buckinghamshire.

At Olney, Newton composed and published many sermons and religious letters, some spiritual exercises in verse, and a brief survey of Ecclesiastical History. There also he formed that friendship which the genius of Cowper has immortalised; became the friend and almoner of John Thornton, the munificent; and contributed largely to form and to mature the theological system of Thomas Scott, the commentator. At Olney, also, he himself laboured to inculcate that system, but with no happy issue. After a continuance there of sixteen years, he acknowledged, and deplored, his inability to restrain the 'gross licentiousness' of his followers 'on particular occasions,' and was at length driven away 'by the incorrigible spirit prevailing in the parish, which he had so long laboured to reform.'

He was indebted to John Thornton for a place of refuge from Olney, and for a station of far greater prominence. He became the rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street, in the city of London, where he continued till the year 1807, when he died in the eighty-third year of his age, in the twenty-seventh of his incumbency of that church, and in the forty-third of his ministry.

The animal homo, male or female, is always found in a defective, crude, and distorted state, unless when exhibiting, in his or her character, a certain fusion and reconciliation of the distinctive qualities of either sex. A tearless, cheerless, pitiless world this globe of ours would have been, if, according to the wish ascribed to our first progenitor, his race could have been perpetuated without the intervention of Eve or of her daughters! A world in which love, hate, zeal, hope, courage, and every other active passion would have burnt fiercely and blazed brilliantly; but where sensibility, fear, compassion, modesty, sympathy, and all the other passive emotions, would have been wanting to counteract and mitigate the flame! A world in which the lawless many would have been a band of homicides, and in which the heroic few would have borne a strong resemblance to John



Newton, the sailor, the slave-trader, the author, and the rector of St. Mary Woolnoth. His strength and his weakness alike consisted in the strange predominance of the male above the female elements of his nature.

In his own age and country few ministers of the Gospel occupied a more conspicuous station, or exercised a more extensive influence. But he attained that eminence by asserting for himself a distinction which nothing but the most absolute *mascularity* could have challenged. It was the distinction of having emerged from a depth of moral debasement into which few men had ever fallen, and from which scarcely any man had ever been restored. In the narrative which he published of his own life, he had the courage to describe himself as having been 'the willing slave of every evil, possessed with a legion of unclean spirits;'—as not only 'having sinned with a high hand himself, but as having made it his study to tempt and seduce others upon every occasion; very eagerly seeking occasion;'—as 'big with mischief, and like one infected with a pestilence, capable of spreading a taint wherever he went;'—as 'shunned and despised,' even by the savages among whom he lived, 'and as an outcast lying in his blood.'

When Newton indited these and many other passages of equally bitter self-condemnation, he certainly neither desired nor expected to be understood by his readers to the letter. Pachydermatous as he was, he could not propose to draw on himself either the abhorrence, or the indignation, or even the distrust of the world. The wilful and deliberate murder of one's own good name, is a crime unknown in the catalogue of human offences. Such a *felo-de-se* would be ripe for any other felony. What, then, suggested these confessions, and what was the meaning which the writer of them really designed to convey?

They were certainly not the product of that voracious vanity which finds its account even in self-crimination, and which would rather depict the vices, faults, and follies of the painter, than banish self altogether from the canvas. This canine appetite for human sympathy of any kind, and on any terms, is the disease of men tormented, like Rousseau, by irritable nerves and a delicate organisation. But Newton had nerves of brass, and his sinews were iron.

Neither is it credible that he used these dark colours in his self-portraiture in order to win the praise of humility, candour, and tenderness of the awakened conscience. The veil of penitence has, indeed, been sometimes worn for this purpose; and there have not been wanting those who have gratified a morbid ambition by appearing in public in the white sheet falling round them in graceful folds, and arranged as an ornamental drapery. But from

the very bottom of his manly heart, Newton would have loathed all such nauseous affectations. He had not a thought or a feeling in common with Lord Byron and his imitators. To his last breath, he was an honest downright sailor, who always employed what seemed to him the most apt, direct, and intelligible words to express what he really thought.

And such was doubtless his purpose in his penitential autobiography. His mistake was that of transferring to the press the language of the oratory. When he lifted up his voice in the marketplace, and when he went into his secret chamber, and shut to the door, his style was still the same. He poured out the language of self-crimination without changing a word, whether he addressed the sacred presence invoked in his prayers, or the coarse, bad world without. Insensible to the proprieties of places and of times, he could not perceive that Truth herself ceases to be true, unless she shapes her discourse to the apprehension of her audience. Rightly judging that, in the retrospect of the sins of his youth, he could not abase himself too much when bowing down before the Holiest, he erroneously inferred that it was impossible to exaggerate his guilt when addressing his fellow-sinners on the same melancholy theme. Yet no danger could be greater or more evident.

When divested of all colouring, and stated in plain words, the fact appears to be that, in his seafaring life, from his seventeenth to his twenty-second year, Newton was irreligious and profane, and was accustomed to violate the Seventh Commandment as recklessly as the third; but that, even in those evil days, he was habitually sober and scrupulously honest. At a later period, taking the Scriptures for his law, and the evangelical commentators on them for his counsellors, he might well look back on his early career with profound shame and with the deepest consciousness of ill desert. But, when he confided those self-upbraidings to mankind at large in language so contrite, so emphatic, and so vague, what could he reasonably expect but that (deeming it altogether inappropriate to the occasion, if referring merely to the impieties and debaucheries of a very young sailor when surrounded by every form of temptation) the world would adopt one of two theories—either that it referred to guilt, of which any more precise mention would have been insufferable, or that it stood on the same level, in point of sincerity, with the penitential emblazonments of William Huntington, ‘Sinner Saved,’ and of his worshipful fraternity? By what method were Newton’s contemporaries to discover that the voice which reached them from the vicarage of Olney, was the exact echo of his solitary devotions there, and that he who invited them to so strange a confidence, was neither an enormous transgressor, nor an

actor wearing the mask of contrition, but a straightforward sailor, who, with a skin as thick as the copper sheathing of his ship, laid bare the recesses of his conscience with as little squeamishness as he would have thrown open her hold and overhauled her cargo.

The perfect good faith with which the penitent confessed himself to his readers, is sufficiently proved by the disappointment which he prepared for them at the very same moment. There is a natural history of religious conversions. It commences with melancholy, advances through contrition to faith, is then conducted to tranquillity, and after a while, to rapture, and subsides at length into an abiding consolation and peace. No epoch in this mental progress can be passed over by the narrator of any such change without raising some suspicion of its genuineness in those who have studied the human heart, rather as it is described in pious books, than as it works in pious men. But, braving all such suspicions and strong in conscious sincerity, Newton acknowledged, without the least reserve, that he had overleapt all of these stages. His heart of oak had been rent by no poignant sorrow, nor had it been agitated by any tumultuous joy, from the beginning to the end of his spiritual course. With no vehement internal conflict whatever, he shed the skin of a dissolute seaman, and sheltered himself in that of a devout clergyman. He gave up bad habits of life for an infinitely better course, with abundant good sense, seriousness, and deliberation, but with very little passion or excitement. Ill as such an anomaly squared with the prepossessions of those for whom he wrote, he would not deviate by an hair's breadth from the simple truth, nor affect any feeling which he had not really experienced, either to propitiate the good will of his teachers or disciples, or to do homage to their religious theories.

With similar hardihood Newton threw the broad glare of day into the Arcana of his most sacred human affections. He had loved Mary Catlett with all the fervent energy of truth. He depicted that love to the world at large, with all the unscrupulous minuteness of fiction. The ardour of his attachment had triumphed over absence, profligacy, and despair. His letters to her throbbing with every pulse of that emotion, were, during his own lifetime, on sale at the book-stalls! She was to him a second existence, dearer and holier than his own. But, on the arrival of her mortal agony, 'I took,' he says, 'my post by her bed-side, and watched her nearly three hours, with a candle in my hand, till I saw her breathe her last.' 'I was afraid of sitting at home, and indulging myself by poring over my loss, and therefore I was seen in the street, and visited some of my serious friends the very next day. I likewise

preached three times while she lay dead in the house, and, after she was deposited in the vault, I preached her funeral sermon with little more sensible emotion than if it had been for another person.' 'I preached from a text which I had reserved from my first entrance on the ministry for this particular service, if I should survive her, and be able to speak.'

Newton was a copious writer of letters. They were pious, wise, and affectionate, and flowed freely out from the depths, which much self-knowledge, and much study, had opened in his mind. They were admirably adapted to feed the flame of devotion in the bosoms of the writer and of his correspondents, and to one collection of them, he accordingly gave the appropriate title of *Cardiphonia*. But the language of Newton's heart became, in his own lifetime, one of the embellishments of the windows of Paternoster Row! Romance and poetry have beautifully said, and fondly sung, much of friendship the balm of life. It is, however, a balm which loses much of its virtue if rubbed in with a rough hand. However unquestionable a blessing in itself, it may, by such management, be rendered a no less unequivocal discipline. Such, probably, was the judgment of Newton's correspondents, when they found his letters to them advertised in the newspapers. Such also was apparently the judgment of the most illustrious of his friends, William Cowper.

No two human beings ever experienced more fully the attractive force of contrarieties of tastes and tempers, than the pastor and the poet of Olney. The sensitive man of genius partook in the labours, revered the character, loved the person, and writhed in the grasp, of his robust and hard-favoured neighbour; and when he sang the fate of the rose, broken in a rude attempt to shake off the moisture which depressed it, he probably aimed a gentle rebuke at the ungentle touch which was occasionally put forth at the vicarage, to dry up his own tears. The cohesion between the two was obviously never complete. There was, indeed, one repulsive force, which must always have prevented it. Newton had been the manager of a slave factory, and the master of a slave ship. Cowper abhorred the slave-trade with his whole soul, and denounced it with passionate energy. Horrors which had been invisible to the mariner, though placed immediately before his bodily eyes, had presented themselves to the imagination of the poet in all their frightful details. The one had publicly commemorated his pursuit of this traffic, without one word of apology or self-reproach on that account. The other was calling on God and man to arrest it as a crime, in which all the varieties of human wickedness met, and associated, in deadly union. Between the writer of such an



autobiography, and the writer of such verse, there yawned a gulph which nothing could ever entirely fill up.

The prolonged slave-trading of John Newton, and still more his cold and phlegmatic avowal of it, has ever been the great blot on his 'evangelical' scutcheon. Before the tribunal in which Posterity sits in judgment on the men of former times, he appears not in his sailor's blue jacket, but in full canonicals. Being arraigned, as a remorseless slave-trader, his defence is, that he was eminent as a penitent, still more eminent as a saint, and eminent above all as a zealous and effective preacher of righteousness. The judges are accordingly required to pronounce a decree, consigning his memory either to the lowest degradation, or to the highest posthumous glory. A singular and a perplexing dilemma for the bench!

One point seems clear enough. Newton could not be, at one and the same time, a slave-trader and a saint. To this extent he may safely be judged out of his own mouth. 'I would not give a straw' (such is his impartial and honest declaration) 'for that assurance which sin will not damp. If David had come from his adultery, and had talked of his assurance at that time, I should have despised his speech.' When Newton himself came from his man-stealing, and his homicides, and talked of his 'sweet hours of divine communion on his last voyage to Guinea,'—and of no employment 'affording greater advantages to an awakened mind, for promoting the life of God in the soul, especially to a person who has the command of a ship,' 'and still more so in African voyages,'—we are compelled to take up his own parable against him, and, in his own words, to say that his speech is to be despised. There can be no fellowship between light and darkness; and woe to us if reverence for any name, however worthy, zeal for any doctrines, however orthodox, or attachment to any party, however estimable, shall induce us to disregard the eternal land-marks between good and evil, or to believe that the service of Moloch can be reconciled with the service of God. Let Him be true, and every man a liar.

Does it then follow that the venerable John Newton was either an impostor, or the unresisting victim of self-love and of self-deceit? A thousand times no! All that can be inferred is that his priesthood at the altar of Mammon, with its blood-stained rites, could not be synchronous with his priesthood at that other shrine, at which human love presumes to offer, and divine love condescends to accept, the heart of the worshipper as the one appropriate sacrifice. At that shrine Newton ministered during forty-three successive years, the very counterpart of our old friend Mr. Greatheart, beneath whose shield Mr. Feeblemind and Mrs.

Much-afraid found shelter, and before whose arm the walls of Doubting Castle and the might of Giant Despair were overthrown. The charge that, during some preceding years, he was a ruthless slave-trader, and that to the last he was little sensible of the heinousness of that guilt, cannot be admitted to countervail such services, or to obscure the lustre of a life in which the brightness of his Christian course was unsullied by a single stain during more than half a century.

For in the court of Posterity it is a well-settled point of law, that in mitigation, if not in bar, of any penal sentence, the defendant may plead, that the generation to which he belonged did not regard as culpable, or as scandalous, the conduct imputed to him as a crime by men of a later age; but that, on the contrary, it was sanctioned by the prevalent opinions, and countenanced by the general practice, of his contemporaries. This apology may be justly alleged on behalf of Newton. In his early days the current of public sentiment in favour of the slave-trade ran too strongly to be stemmed, except by the most powerful understanding, guided by the most healthful conscience. There can be no reason to distrust the accuracy of the following statement, in which he adverts to his own participation in it:—

‘During the time I was engaged in the slave-trade, I never had the least scruple as to its lawfulness. I was, upon the whole, satisfied with it, as the appointment Providence had marked out for me.’ ‘However, I considered myself as a sort of jailer or turnkey, and I was sometimes shocked with an employment that was perpetually conversant with chains, bolts, and shackles. In this view I had often petitioned in my prayers that the Lord in his own time would be pleased to fix me in a more humane calling.’ Such is the dominion of the social over the individual conscience! Such the control which the immoral maxims of his associates may obtain, even over a devout student of Holy Scripture! So hopeless is it to shape a right course, even by the aid of that heavenly compass, unless the navigator shall make allowance for the disturbing influence of the magnetic currents through which he is passing! Richard Cecil himself, who completed and republished Newton’s Biography, seems to have been blind to the wide deviation of the needle, by which his friend and brother evangelist was misled. He gave to their common disciples a new edition of that work, without so much as one passing remark on the incongruity with which the warp of homicidal recollections is there interwoven with the woof of devotional exercises. Alas for the inconsistency of the wisest and the best among us! But alas also for the severity with which the untempted censure even the

penitent victims of temptation! Such censures are not seldom founded rather on human dogmas, than on any divine revelations. If he who forsakes the error of his ways, has been assured by the Supreme Judge that the gates of mercy shall be thrown open to him, who shall presume to close them on such a transgressor, because he has failed to exhibit all the compunctious mourning prescribed by some favourite theory of repentance? Though Newton did not smite upon his breast, nor put sackcloth and ashes under him on the remembrance of his slave-trading, he yet abandoned the practice itself, and gravely, though composedly, condemned it. When summoned to the bar of the House of Lords as a witness, he censured, without reserve, in his old age, the pursuits of his youth, and contributed, by his evidence, to prevent the crimes to which he had given too much countenance by his confessions as well as by his example. He thus entitled himself, if not to applause or sympathy, at least to absolution.

To the hard texture of Newton's mind must be ascribed much of the force, as well as most of the faults, of his character, and much of the success of his apostolate. It was his province to work at the foundations of a great and necessary reform in the spirit of the Established Church of England. His weapon, therefore, was the pickaxe of the builder rather than the chisel of the sculptor; or, in the dialect of his original calling, he had need, not for the delicate touch which regulates the time-keeper, but for the brawny arm which turns the windlass. The bark of Peter was at that time deeply imbedded in the mud banks of a somnolent orthodoxy; but when she was well afloat, under the pilotage of Newton and his brethren, he shaped a steady course, and without shifting a sail pursued his way to his destined harbour. Or, to drop these nautical figures, when Newton had gathered from the Bible that creed, for which the instructions of Whitfield had prepared him, he clung to it till his last breath with unabated hardihood, sincerity, and courage. Never molested by any speculative doubts, never depressed by any melancholy misgivings, never embarrassed by the refinements of the outer world, he took his stand with firmness, and then advanced with decision, at the command of his own understanding, at the bidding of his own conscience, and at the impulse of his own heart. For, having consecrated these and all his faculties to the service of God, he lived in the joyful conviction of the continual presence of that infallible guide. A century of learned investigation would have availed him infinitely less than this resolute fidelity to his own nature. Prayer, obedience, practical wisdom, contemplative wisdom, and again prayer, each producing and reproducing the other, became the unbroken routine of his life,

a circle ever revolving with a still wider range and a more brilliant radiance. Looking upward, and moving onward, he passed by the critics and philosophers, the worldly great, and the worldly wise, as so many busy idlers, who might impede, but who could not advance, the one great object of his renovated existence. To raise aloft the banner of the cross, that men might look to it and be saved, — to exhibit Christ as the alpha and omega of his ministrations, — to inculcate this 'foolishness' as the one true wisdom, — to trample on all wisdom at variance with this, as but so much gaudy foolishness, — to derive all motives to holiness, all consolation, fortitude, energy, and peace from that one central source of light and love, — to unfold the mystery of a living union with that living head, — to irradiate with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, all the dark questions which perplex the intellect of fallen man, and all the still darker inquiries which press with so heavy a burden on his heart, — to be, in short, in all the comprehensive fulness of the words, a preacher of the Gospel — such was the purpose which, without pause or faltering, occupied, during more than half a century, the soul of John Newton.

To this arduous task, he brought no exquisite or remarkable abilities. His writings are characterised by a rich unction of Christian kindness, by plain sound sense, by a perspicuous and easy style, and by the natural bloom which always adorns the genuine fruits of the personal experience, and the unborrowed reflection of any shrewd observer of human affairs. Cecil, a friendly and most competent critic, says of his preaching, that 'he appeared perhaps to least advantage in the pulpit, as he did not generally aim at accuracy in the composition of his sermons, nor to any address in the delivery of them. His utterance was far from clear, and his attitudes ungraceful.' To these faults he frequently added the intolerable error of preaching without premeditation. What, then, is the ground on which a place can be assigned to John Newton, amongst those whose memory ought to outlive the age to which they belonged?

His title to a niche in the temple of fame rests on the great effects which many of the best and most observant of his contemporaries ascribed to the energy, the decision, and the singleness of heart, with which he laboured among them. The promise to the Father of the Faithful, that the doomed city should be spared, if ten righteous men could be found in it, was an intimation to him and to his descendants, that the united efforts of even so small a number of such men would have rendered impossible the widespread depravity of which the cry had ascended up to Heaven. For, however deadly may be the contagion propagated by those



who go hand in hand to work wickedness, the sympathetic influence of the smallest band, inflexibly devoted to any wise and holy enterprise, is more active still. The greater frequency of associations for evil than for good, and their more extensive results, attest the superior strength of the inducements to form them, not their superior strength when actually formed. Who can assign a limit to the dominion over the selfish, inert, and sensual mass, even of a solitary mind, when wrought up to a great and immutable resolve, although it be armed with no other authority than that which God himself, by evident tokens, commits to all his appointed missionaries? The history of all the great moral renovations of any large bodies of mankind is indeed nothing else than a series of the biographies of men bearing a general resemblance to John Newton. Among congregations which adhered to the Church and to the ritual of their forefathers, he assumed the office, which had been discharged with far higher powers, and much more conspicuous success, by Whitfield, among the enraptured crowds which hung upon his lips. Newton lived to see his pulpit surrounded by the adult grandchildren of his first hearers, and the tradition of his doctrine, his piety, and his undeviating perseverance, is a part of the inheritance of many who at this day stand at the distance of several descents from them. In the genealogy which connects the spiritual ancestry of his age with their spiritual progeny in our own, he holds an eminent place. Himself the child of Whitfield, he was one of the progenitors of Claudius Buchanan, to whom the Church in India owes so large a debt of gratitude — of William Wilberforce, to whom the Church Universal is still more largely indebted — of Joseph Milner, whom he induced to write the 'History of the Church' of ancient times — and of Thomas Scott, who has bequeathed to the Church, in ages yet to come, writings of imperishable value, and the memory of a life passed in no unsuccessful emulation of those of whom this unhallowed world was the least worthy.

Thomas, the tenth child of John Scott, a grazier in Lincolnshire, was born in February 1747. After passing five years to little profit at a grammar school at Scorton, in that county, he was apprenticed to a medical practitioner. From that service he was dismissed for some unexplained, but 'gross' misconduct. At the age of sixteen he returned home and passed the nine following years in 'the most laborious and dirty parts of the grazier's business.' The hope that he should one day inherit the farm on which he worked, sustained him under these toils, until he accidentally discovered that his father had made a will, disposing of it in favour of another of his sons. To escape the necessity of

passing his life in menial employments as a shepherd or herdsman, Thomas Scott forthwith applied himself with vigour to regain and to enlarge such knowledge of Greek and Latin as he had acquired at school. Undeterred by the difficulties which so often seem to forbid, while they really promote, the success of a poor, unaided, solitary student, he mastered many classical, and some theological books. Among the last was a Socinian Commentary on the Bible. This 'poison he drank greedily,' and became 'nearly a Socinian and Pelagian, and wholly an Arminian.'

With this amount of preparation, and in this state of religious belief, Mr. Scott became a deacon of the Church of England in March 1773, by the 'laying on of the hands' of the then bishop of Lincoln. The story of his life from that epoch, occupies nearly 500 pages of a volume, written by his son, with such filial piety, such guileless simplicity of heart, and so much deep and unostentatious wisdom, as to give it a place among those books which suspend the critical spirit of the reader during his progress, and leave his thirst for intercourse with the writer unsatiated to the end. Yet seldom has a less eventful tale been told. The external incidents of it may all be comprised in one brief paragraph.

Mr. Scott became curate of Stoke Goldingham in Buckinghamshire, where he married Mrs. Jane Kell, who bore him a numerous offspring. From Stoke Goldingham, he removed to Ravenstone, from Ravenstone to Weston, and from Weston to Olney, all adjacent parishes in the same county, in each of which successively he held the office of curate. After passing more than thirteen years in these services, he was appointed to preach at a chapel, attached to a hospital, then standing in Grosvenor Place, where he laboured during the next seventeen years. In that interval death deprived him of his wife, but the benignity of Providence directed him to another wise and happy marriage. He was presented, in 1803, to the rectory of Ashton Sandford, in Buckinghamshire, and died there in April, 1821.

He died unknown, even by name, to all, or nearly to all, of the statesmen and warriors, to whose glory the annals of the reign of George III. are dedicated, although no one of that illustrious band had really hewn out for himself a monument so sublime and imperishable. He died unknown or unheeded by the poets, the philosophers, the historians, and the artists, who during the same momentous era, had established an intellectual sovereignty in his native land, although he had laid the basis of a wider and more enduring dominion than had been acquired by the most triumphant of their number. He died neglected, if not despised, by the hierarchy of the Church of England, although in him she lost a teacher, weighed

against whom those most reverend, right reverend, very reverend and venerable personages, if all thrown together into the opposing scale, would at once have kicked the beam. But he died amidst the regrets, and yet lives in the grateful remembrance, of numbers without number, who, on either side of the Atlantic (in continental, as well as in insular Britain), had found in his writings such a mass of diversified instruction, such stores of intellectual and of spiritual nutriment, such completeness and maturity of divine knowledge, so steady and so pure a light to lighten the dark places of Holy Scripture, so absolute a devotedness to truth, and so indefatigable a pursuit of truth, as they had not found in any or in all of the theologians who wrote or spake in his own times, and in his own mother tongue.

Panting to emerge from the mean pursuits to which he had been born and bred, and deluded by sophistries then generally prevalent, Mr. Scott had, with the most solemn vows, declared his unconditional assent and consent to the creeds, the articles, and the liturgy of the Anglican Church, although he had rejected more than one of the doctrines which those formulas represent as fundamental;—doubtless a great offence, which no true disciple of his would ever excuse or palliate, and which it is impossible to reprobate more strongly than in the terms of his own public self-condemnation. The dominion of Pelagius, Socinus, and Arminius over him, was however but short-lived. They abdicated it in favour of their rivals, Augustin, Athanasius, and Calvin; and, under the title of 'The Force of Truth,' Scott published a narrative of this interior revolution, which is extolled by Dr. Wilson, the present Bishop of Calcutta, as only second, and as scarcely inferior, in value, to the confessions of the great Bishop of Hippo. A venturous eulogium; but it may be safely said that the book is a luminous and dispassionate portraiture of a series of mental phenomena of rare occurrence, of deep interest, and of such a character, that no man could have been the subject of them, without the severest integrity, nor the delineator of them, without singular perspicacity and force of mind.

In this remarkable volume, Scott sketches himself at his original curacy in no very attractive colours — as a needy, proud, morose, and ambitious churchman, negligent even of the forms of private devotion, and wrapt up in those learned inquiries, from which he hoped at some future time to gather literary fame and professional advancement. It happened that the mortal illness of two of his parishioners had failed to draw this eager student from his books; but Newton had found his way from his parsonage at Olney to their bed-sides, with ghostly advice and consolation. Scott listened meekly to the rebukes which this contrast drew upon

him from his own conscience. He sought the society of his more zealous neighbour, and even became an occasional attendant at his church. But he attended it in vain. On one of those occasions Newton had selected, as the subject of his discourse, St. Paul's denunciation of the sorcerer Elymas, and Scott was moved to irresistible merriment, by the belief that the preacher was aiming his uncharitable and pointless shafts at himself, as the 'child of the devil, full of all subtlety and mischief.' Yet revering the honesty of his supposed censor, and assured of his own superiority as a controversialist and a scholar, Scott challenged him to a written debate on their religious differences. The proposal was wisely declined. Newton estimated theological debate at its true value, and perhaps had the discretion to perceive his own comparative poverty in the weapons of that warfare, and his unskilfulness in the use of them. He therefore encountered the argumentative letters of his antagonist by courteous and affectionate answers. He wisely judged that in the field of Polemics, that rude and haughty spirit would have been exasperated into error; but he perceived that it was united to an uprightness and a courage which, in the quiet ways of secluded meditation, might guide him peacefully to the knowledge and to the love of truth.

This friendly anticipation was soon verified. Scott received an offer of preferment. He had thirsted and laboured for it, but nothing could tempt him to set his hand again to a confession from which his heart dissented. He chose to remain a necessitous curate, rather than to become a rich but hypocritical incumbent. He has not explained, and it is vain to conjecture, how he so nearly approached, without reaching the inference, that the same principle demanded the abandonment of his poor curacy also, and of his clerical rank and office. But blessings on him who gives us an example of genuine integrity, even though it be not absolutely self-consistent. In his own time, and by his own connexions, his refusal of preferment was condemned, not as an incomplete sacrifice, but as a feeble scrupulosity. From the sting of that censure he knew how to extract a salutary truth. In his self-communings on the subject, he inquired why he should receive any human authority as the foundation of any part of his religious creed, when, upon a point of moral obligation so incomparably more simple, they who loved him best, and whom he best loved, could fall into an error so obvious and so profound. He turned away from his well-meaning, but ill-judging advisers, with a solemn resolution that he would 'search the word of God with the single intention to discover whether the articles of the Church of England in general were or were not agreeable to the Scriptures.'



The history of that search occupies the larger part of 'The Force of Truth.' It was pursued during three successive years in retirement, and almost in solitude. The Bible lay continually open on his table. Day by day, and hour by hour, he implored the Divine Author of it to become also the infallible interpreter. From page to page, and from sentence to sentence, he searched, weighed, and collated every word with unremitting diligence and inextinguishable ardour. He does not seem to have armed himself with any critical apparatus, or to have sought the assistance of any human commentators. He had rejected the authority of all men over his faith, and therefore of these men. Yet he was not wholly unaided by theological advisers. He summoned to his succour a series of writers, of whose works it seems strange that he should till then have been ignorant. They are among the most trite and popular in our language.

First came Locke, with his 'Essay on the Reasonableness of Christianity,' which only supplied Scott with arguments in favour of his Socinian, or, in more modern phrase, his rationalistic errors. Then Burnet's 'Pastoral Care' sent him back to the study of the Scriptures, not without an awful rebuke for his past negligence as a minister of the Gospel. Tillotson and Jortin next presented themselves, to teach (as we are told) neither law nor gospel, but a compromise of both, and tempted him, too successfully, to the indolent practice of transcribing their sermons for his own pulpit. Soame Jenyns, with his 'Internal Evidences,' broke up in his soul an hitherto undiscovered depth of religious feeling, which Dr. Samuel Clarke contributed again to close up, by his 'Scriptural Doctrine of the Trinity.' For although Clarke refuted the dogmas of Socinus, he substituted for them the errors of Arius, from which Scott afterwards perceived there was a straight, and only not inevitable, descent to Atheism. The mystic Law, in his 'Serious Call,' taught our inquirer the need of a more earnest diligence, and a more profound devotion than he had hitherto practised, and drew from him a vow, which, to his latest hour, he preserved inviolate, 'never more to engage in any pursuit not evidently subservient to his ministerial usefulness, or to the propagation of Christianity.'

But, last of all, there appeared in Scott's secret chamber one before whose majestic presence Locke and Burnet, Tillotson and Jortin, Jenyns, Clarke, and Law, retreated into obscurity and silence, like the interlocutors in the Platonic dialogue, when the voice of Socrates is heard. With his 'Sermon on Justification,' the great and judicious Hooker put to flight, at once and for ever, the more oppressive doubts which had overshadowed the mind of

the student, and enabled him to plant his foot immovably on Luther's rock, *stantis aut cadentis ecclesie*. He was at once astonished and delighted to find that the great adversary of the Puritans, the illustrious champion of the polity of the Church of England, had announced that doctrine with as full an emphasis, and with as fearless an unreserve, as the German Reformer, and as the founders of Methodism.

Up to this period, Scott had never seen the Homilies of that Church, which her Thirty-fifth Article declares to contain 'a godly and wholesome doctrine.' He read them with eagerness and with surprise, for they completely echoed the voices of Luther, of Hooker, and of Whitfield. Convinced, yet shrinking from the public avowal of his convictions, he opportunely met with one of the works of Henry Venn, who taught him (what no man had a better title, or more ability, to teach) the contempt of every motive which would, for one hour, delay the amplest acknowledgment of any part of any of the truths which his Saviour had lived to proclaim, and had died to establish.

And now the Socinian had adopted the Creed of Nicæa, the Pelagian had admitted that, unaided by divine grace, every thought and desire of the heart was immersed in an utter and hopeless corruption, and the Formalist was convinced that the justification of sinful man is produced by faith alone, without the works either of the ceremonial or of the moral law. Thus the entire system, then and since distinguished as 'Evangelical,' had gained possession of his mind. But he drew back from the belief that, notwithstanding the stupendous and unutterable mercy of the Incarnation of Deity itself, a comparatively small number only of the race whose nature was thus assumed by their Creator, had, by his irreversible decree, been elected, to the exclusion of all the rest, and predestined, not only to eternal happiness, but to an incapacity of forfeiting that inestimable privilege. He attained, however, to this belief also, by the devout study of the sacred oracles; although, in this inquiry, he accepted the aid of two writers, each of whom must have regarded the other as a kind of hopeless riddle, if they could have read each other's books. These were Lipsius, the grave expositor of the 'Economy of the Covenants,' and Harvey, the efflorescent author of 'Theron and Aspasia.'

The whole cycle of doctrine was now complete, and, ever faithful to the light which he possessed, Scott enforced his new tenets from his own pulpit, and sat as a child, to receive a more perfect exposition of them from the lips of Newton. Nearly half a century of apostolic labour lay before him. During that period he continued to search and to ponder the Scriptures with an intensity of appli-

cation, and a perseverance of prayer, of which the records of our own age and country afford no counterpart. The result was but to add to the stability of the convictions he had derived from his early studies. As the world receded from his view, he clung to them with increased tenacity, and his dying breath attested his indestructible affiance in them.

Such are the facts. They are important, chiefly as forming the foundation of an argument, which has been very widely diffused, and cordially accepted, in favour of Mr. Scott's peculiar theological opinions. He observes that the system which he thus embraced, was in direct contradiction to his long-cherished views — that his spirit and temper indisposed him to such a departure from any position which he had once deliberately taken up — that the change was hostile to his secular interests — and that it exposed him to contumelies and contempt, from which no man could shrink with a more acute sensitiveness. He remarks that this change in his opinions took place very gradually — that it was not preceded or accompanied by any instruction from those to whose sentiments he acceded — that the only uninspired books which he consulted were those of writers of high reputation in the Church of England — that he was indebted for his opinions to the study of the Scriptures, incomparably more than to all other studies — and that he read them with fervent and unceasing prayer for the right understanding of them. He very solemnly denies that his narrative is clouded by any enthusiastic dreams or illusions, or that it is more or less than a plain record of so many real occurrences. Hence he infers that the conclusions to which he attained must necessarily be just and true; an inference irresistibly following (as he conceives) from the enormous impieties with which the denial of it is pregnant.

For, if a man devoted to the pursuit of truth, sacrificing his fondest prejudices, his interest, and his reputation, for the love of truth — labouring intensely during three successive years, by night and by day, for the discovery of truth — taking the word of God as his only authoritative expositor of truth, and studying that word with earnest and habitual prayer for the attainment of truth; — if such a man shall be at last left under any grave and dangerous error, how escape the revolting consequence, that we may ask and not receive — seek and not find — knock without having the door opened — sue for bread and receive a stone — be disappointed in the confidence we are taught to repose in our Heavenly Father — and find even the divine promises an insecure foundation of our hopes? 'Can any man,' exclaims Mr. Scott, 'suppose that after such repeated and continual pleadings of the express promises of the Lord to this effect, in earnest prayer, according to his appoint-

ment, I should be delivered up to the teaching of the father of lies? Can any one make this conclusion without an evident insinuation that God hath broken his promises?'

Taunt a Roman Catholic with his doctrine of infallibility, and he answers that his creed confines that awful prerogative to the Christian Church, as represented either by an œcumenical Synod, or by her supreme earthly Head; but that such Protestants as Mr. Scott acknowledge that the number of devout persons and of infallible persons is the same, and believe that, although such persons are collectively unable to agree, they are individually unable to err. Such a disputant leaps over the dilemma of 'the force of truth,' at a single bound. He denies that Holy Scripture contains any promise of illumination, excepting of such as shall be conveyed through the appointed channels, and means of grace, in the Church. He thinks it no contradiction to the divine word, and certainly no marvel, that a man should consume a long life in isolated biblical studies, however energetic, and in solitary meditation and prayer, however fervent, without discovering the narrow way which leads to truth and life, or escaping the broad way which leads to error and to perdition; for such a man has rejected what his Roman Catholic antagonist maintains to be the one source of light, laid open by Heaven itself for the guidance of man.

Neither are Protestants really hedged up between the adoption of Mr. Scott's religious system, and the abandonment of their reliance on the divine promises. For they insist that all such promises are conditional, and that every promise of divine guidance is qualified by the condition, express or implied, that the search for it be made in the pure love of truth, and without the bias of any secular motive. But it is irrational to say, that Mr. Scott conducted his inquiries with this entire impartiality. He had the strongest possible inducement to get rid of his original tenets. They were utterly inconsistent with his preferment, and even with his continuance in his sacred office. He tells us that he had 'perceived his Socinian principles to be very disreputable,' and that he had been compelled 'to conceal them in a great measure.' He might have stated this much more strongly. It would not merely have been disreputable, but base and criminal, to have adhered at once to his opinions and to his profession.

Further, that search for truth, which the divine veracity is pledged to assist, is a search conducted in the use of those means which the divine beneficence has seen fit to supply. Of these not the least considerable is conference with the wise, either in their persons, or in their writings. But, during the three years of his biblical investigations, Mr. Scott seems to have withdrawn not only



from all intellectual society, but from all theological reading. His whole catalogue of auxiliary books would hardly afford serious occupation for one month to a student of ordinary diligence; and, although he afterwards extended his book knowledge more widely, he seems never to have possessed more than a very slight acquaintance with the works of any divines, ancient or modern. But he who revolves the text of Holy Scripture without informing himself how it has been interpreted by any of the great teachers of the Church, has no right to expect immunity from those errors to which we are all liable, in all our studies, and on all subjects, when we wilfully cut ourselves off from the resources of our social nature, and from a free intercourse with the minds of other men.

Mr. Scott's alternative 'think with me, or cease to believe that he who seeks shall find,' implies, or rather affirms, that none ever sought as he sought, excepting only those who concluded their search by thinking as he thought. He disposes of all experiments attended with an opposite result, by denying that they were conducted with the same good faith, simplicity of purpose, earnestness and devotion, as his own. Such inquirers as found at length any resting-place rejected by him, were, as he assures us, either persons leaning to their own understanding — or persons held in bondage by human authority — or persons incredulous of their own liability to error — or persons blinded by prejudice, or heated by controversy — or persons whose dissent from his own conclusions touches only points of minor importance, that is, does not encroach on any part of his system, excepting that which relates to the predestination and final perseverance of the chosen few. Now, it is a matter of fact, clear and indisputable, that a vast company of those who have been honoured in the Christian Churches, as worthies of the highest name, lived and died in a faith far more remote than this from the faith of Thomas Scott. But it is a mere matter of conjecture, admitting of no proof whatever, that all of these persons were justly liable to some one or more of the imputations thus cast upon them. And it is a most improbable conjecture. Can any one be named, who held and taught all Mr. Scott's doctrines, among the throng of saints and martyrs, and confessors, who flourished between the days of Clement of Rome and those of Augustin? Can we ascribe the belief of them to any of those who have been most illustrious for piety in the Roman Catholic communion, as, for example, to St. Bernard, to Savonarola, to St. Charles Borromeo, to St. Francis De Sales, to Pascal, to De Saci, or to Fénelon? Must we conclude that, in their biblical inquiries, all these illustrious men were either indevout, or presumptuous, or hasty, or bigoted, or arrogant, or

prejudiced, or contentious? Are we to refuse assent to the overwhelming and undisputed evidence on which we have hitherto assigned to each of them a place amongst the most learned, devoted, and reverential lovers and worshippers of divine truth? Had Mr. Scott any such acquaintance with the lives or the writings of the primitive Fathers, or of the modern Catholics, as entitled him to pronounce this indiscriminate censure on them all? Is it not rather the fact, that when he wrote that censure, he was wholly unacquainted with the books of any of them, and with the very names of most of them?

What, then, is the right inference from the incontrovertible facts, that during three successive years Mr. Scott laboured devoutly and energetically to deduce from the Bible the genuine articles of the Christian faith, and that those labours rendered him an immutable adherent of the system called Evangelical? The right inference, we apprehend, is, that in that system is contained whatever was necessary to his peace, to his holiness, and to his eternal welfare. For they who seek shall find. They shall find those practical truths which are essential to their highest good, although they may miss of some abstract truths, which lie within the domain of science rather than of practice. In one sense, indeed, each article of the 'Evangelical' creed, and of every other creed, must either be an absolute truth, or an absolute untruth. But such articles are contemplated by the several adherents or opponents of them, in so many contrary aspects, with such various prepossessions, with so different an use and understanding of words, and with habits of thought so dissimilar, that there is another sense in which such articles may be said to be relatively true, and relatively false — true to one man, false to another. Many agree in the use of a common symbol, who have yet no meaning in common. Many between whom there is no external uniformity, are living in a substantial unanimity. Amidst the mists which envelope us in this life, many opposite deductions have been made from Holy Scripture, by men who in that other life, where such mists are dispersed, have doubtless discovered how much our world is agitated by debates, in which nothing is in fact at issue — how much disturbed by controversialists between whom no real difference exists — and how much occupied by questions which might be decided either way without affecting any vital principle of the religion to which they relate.

But whatever authority Mr. Scott's studies and prayers may or may not have imparted to his opinions, they undoubtedly formed the origin of his future pursuits, and the basis of his eminence, as the great Scriptural commentator of his age. If regarded only in a commercial point of view, the story of his biblical labours would

form a curious addition to the chronicle of the 'calamities of authors.'

There was, it seems, in Scott's early days, a publisher whose name moulders in well-merited oblivion, but whose trading capital consisted in his own unblushing effrontery, and in the command which it gave him over the types, the paper, the ink, and the brains of his credulous neighbours. It occurred to this worthy that a series of weekly annotations on the Bible, from the pen of Mr. Scott, in one hundred successive numbers, would yield a handsome profit to himself, and that the annotator would be splendidly recompensed by the receipt of the same number of guineas. Some well-fed authors of our own times may think that a payment of fifty-two pounds ten shillings in each of two successive years, was but a niggardly recompense for such labours. Mr. Scott judged otherwise. It was an addition of fifty per cent. to the annual income which he earned by officiating four times every Sunday in two churches, between which he had fourteen miles to walk, and by ministering on every other day of the week to the patients at a hospital.

Accordingly, in the year 1788, he sat him down to the composition of his weekly commentaries. The world had cordially welcomed the first fifteen numbers, when the crafty bibliopole announced that the work must be abandoned, unless the author could borrow from his friends, and transfer to him, the sum of 500*l*. These hard terms having been complied with, the book was finished in 174 numbers, for which the commentator received 164 guineas. Then the bookseller became bankrupt, leaving poor Scott to repay the money he had borrowed for his use. A second bookseller purchased the stock of the insolvent, reprinted a large part of it, but refused to account for a shilling of the profits. Rescued by the Court of Chancery from the grasp of this pirate, Scott next braved the perils of becoming his own bookseller, and, after printing two editions of five quarto volumes, and 'scarcely clearing more than the prime cost,' surrendered himself to fate and Paternoster Row, and sold the copyright. At this passage of the tragedy, the stage is darkened by the re-appearance of the Lord Chancellor, at one time fulminating injunctions, at another recalling his own thunderbolts in a manner altogether terrific and inexplicable. At length we reach the catastrophe. It presents to us Thomas Scott, under the accumulated burdens of sixty-seven years, of sickness, and of poverty, investigating his accounts, and ascertaining that 199,900*l*. had been 'paid in his lifetime across the counter' for his theological publications—that he had himself derived from them an income of a little more than 47*l*. per annum—that they

had involved him in a debt of about 1200*l.* — and that all his worldly wealth consisted of a warehouse-full of unsaleable theology. Agitated, alarmed, and distressed, but never desponding, he at length, for the first time, invokes the aid of his friends and fellow-labourers, among whom the large-souled Charles Simeon first answers the appeal with affectionate greetings, with numerous orders for his books, and with a remittance of 560*l.* for his relief. Others rapidly follow this good example, and within two months the warehouse is emptied of its contents, and the great commentator finds himself possessed of more than 2000*l.* With his debts paid, his cares dispersed, his heart warmed to his brethren, and his trust in God justified, the curtain falls on the brave old man applying himself to a new edition of his work, and toiling with all the vigour of youth to compile a new concordance, by which he hopes to emulate and to supersede the vast compilation of Cruden.

Sore vexations doubtless! A rebuke not altogether unmerited, of that amiable inconsistency which, while in deference to a 'remorseless logic' it depicted in the darkest colours the utter depravity of the whole race of man, could see in each individual of it nothing but truth, honour, and integrity personified! But what, after all, were such vexations to Thomas Scott? Of what account were swindlers, blunderers, and suits in Chancery to him, or what cared he even for sickness, penury, and distress? The volume for the elucidation of which he lived had imparted to him that self-sovereignty which the Porch so vainly promised. Animated by one changeless purpose,—devoted to one inexhaustible task, never undertaken but to be finished, never finished but to be resumed,—governed by a creed to which, in each succeeding year, he clung more firmly,—rejoicing in the tranquil assurance, that by a divine decree eternal happiness was his indefeasible inheritance,—blest with a resoluteness of understanding which turned aside from no difficulty, and with a mental energy which trampled down the whole brood of doubts, sophisms, and delusions,—and sustained by a vigour of body which baffled all fatigue and triumphed over all disease,—on he went interpreting the word of his God, and onward he could not but go, though '*fractus illabatur orbis*,'—though publishers should cheat and chancellors restrain him,—though asthma should choke, and fever unnerve him,—though want should hang on him heavily, and critics censure, and congregations desert him,—and though the wife of his bosom should be taken from him. It mattered not. These things could not move him, nor prevent his writing and enlarging, and yet again enlarging, his Commentary. He might safely have challenged the world to produce a more unfortunate, or a more enviable man.



Enviably for many reasons, and not least so (it is but a seeming contradiction), because he brought to his task neither the intellectual powers, nor the intellectual wealth, which we are most accustomed to admire. In his mental economy, imagination existed only as a negative quantity, and, therefore, invention, pathos, vehemence, ardour, and all the other forms of eloquence, were foreign alike to his pen and to his lips. No exact knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, no familiarity with the literature or the languages of modern Europe, no patristic or mediæval learning, no skill in geography, chronology, political or natural history, no mastery of any moral or political science, and no penetrating critical acumen, conducted him through the codes or the annals of the Hebrew theocracy, or illuminated his path amidst the aphorisms, the prophecies, or the mythic intimations of their inspired writers, or enabled him to unravel and to complete the elliptical statements, the suggestive reasoning, and the obscure allusions which more or less darken all the Apostolic Scriptures, and especially such of them as have been thrown into the epistolary form.

But in this poverty he found his wealth, and illustriously vindicated, in his own person, the bold paradox, 'when I am weak then am I strong.' He proposed to himself a canon of biblical criticism more perfect than any which had been followed by Origen, Jerome, Erasmus, or Beza. Believing God to be the common Father of us all, and the Word of God to be the common patrimony of all His children, he was assured that the real meaning of it must have been placed within the reach, not only of the learned few, but also of the unlearned many. But how (he inquired) should that book, which was so often found by the wise to be sealed and inscrutable, be thus intelligible to the simple? He returned the answer to his own inquiry. God is truth, and His word is truth, and all truth must be consistent with itself. He, therefore, who shall diligently, humbly, and devoutly collate every passage of the divine oracles with the rest, will possess himself of the key to that inexhaustible treasury, and, in proportion to the constancy with which he shall repeat this process, will the clearer pages of the Bible illuminate for him those which are more obscure, until a reflected and continually expanding light shall have shed its beams over the whole of the inspired canon.

Mr. Scott's efforts to elucidate the sacred text by the juxtaposition and comparison of the various parts of it with each other, were such that a review of them must affect any ordinary student with shame and admiration. It is scarcely possible to count, and it is vain to conjecture, the number of the illustrations of the sense of scriptural words and phrases with which this method furnished

him. The labour expended in collecting, verifying, and arranging them all, must have oppressed any mind of less than herculean vigour. Yet this was but one, and not the most arduous, of the many employments to which he devoted the scanty leisure allowed to him by the daily and severe pressure of his pastoral and domestic duties. That leisure was chiefly dedicated to the exposition of the truths, and to the enforcement of the practical lessons, which he had extracted from the inspired writings by his indefatigable collation of every part of them.

They who shall judge Mr. Scott's Commentary on the Bible as a work of art, or by those rules which literary artists inculcate and observe, will not pronounce a favourable, and hardly a tolerant, decision. He often wrote with a haste fatal at once to the maturity and to the methodical arrangement of his thoughts. 'I have actually known him' (says his son), 'with great difficulty and suffering, prepare as much copy as he thought would complete the current number, then, when he had retired to bed and taken an emetic, called up again to furnish more; what he had provided being insufficient for his purpose.' It is not permitted to any human being to give birth to any mental offspring after so short a gestation, without consigning it to an existence which must long be precarious, even though it be eventually protracted by the vigour of the natural constitution.

From the same biographer we learn that Mr. Scott 'was compelled, in the first instance,' 'to give the result of his own reflections almost alone, there being little time to consult, much less to transcribe, from other authors.' This exclusive reliance on his own resources brought with it the inevitable results of want of method, of tautology, and of a sameness in the staple of thought, attesting the common origin of all the successive pages. Thus tediousness became the besetting sin, not only of the entire work, but of almost every part and member of it. The unbroken monotony of the style, and the lowness of that uniform level, is maintained throughout six quarto volumes, with scarcely one passing attempt to bestow on any single passage any of the warmth, the vivacity, or the other embellishments which habit has rendered so familiar to us all, as to have almost elevated them to the class of necessities. Dulness is the one unpardonable crime of authorship. Nor can the most zealous of Mr. Scott's admirers deny that his pen has much to answer for on that score. Hence it has come to pass that this vast biblical Thesaurus, though the greatest theological performance of our age and country, has never enjoyed and can never attain, popularity, excepting with those who consult and study it in the same grave, devout, and practical spirit in

which it was written. In proportion as that sacred harmony exists between the commentator and his readers, is the reverence and the attachment with which they follow his guidance ; nor would it be easy to form for any student of the Bible, a better wish, than that he might drink so deeply of Mr. Scott's spirit, as to lose the power of perceiving his defects, and the disposition to censure them.

Any such censure would, indeed, be most unreasonable, if not qualified by a cordial acknowledgment of the merits of that most elaborate commentary. The style if heavy, is at least plain, clear, and unambitious. If there is not in those six volumes, a solitary sentence which could be quoted as an example of pathetic, fervent, or felicitous composition, it is equally true that they might be searched in vain for a sentence put together for effect, or merely interstitial and unmeaning. They are not only replete with thought, but with a greater amount of solid and indigenous thought than perhaps any other man ever accumulated in the solitary and unaided exercise of his own powers of meditation. There they stand, and shall stand for generations yet to come, those bulky tomes ! a huge Cyclopean mass, defying alike the laws of architecture and the tooth of time ; a vast artificial quarry, from which inferior builders may be supplied with materials already wrought and shaped for their puny edifices ; a capacious tank, irrigating the whole thirsty neighbourhood. True they are embellished by no delicate workmanship or superfluous ornament, and have nothing to satisfy a refined and elegant taste. But let the reader of them believe, as the writer of them believed, that the words on which he commented were, in the exact and literal sense, the very words of God himself — that they form the voice, and the only voice, by which the silence between Heaven and earth has ever been broken — that they contain the history which alone discloses the awful origin of our race, and the single prophecy which reveals our still more awful destiny, and the immutable law of our hidden, as well as of our external life, and the great charter of our salvation ; — let the reader implore, as his teacher himself implored, the illumination of every chamber of his soul by rays of light, diverging from every page of that holy volume ; — let him labour, as his teacher laboured, to penetrate to the deepest and the richest ores deposited in those inexhaustible mines of wisdom, — and then he will perceive and feel that Thomas Scott, the comparatively unlearned, the positively unskilful, and the superlatively unamusing commentator, has descended further into the meaning of the sacred oracles, and has been baptized more copiously into their spirit, than the most animated and ingenious and accomplished of his competitors.

This saturation of the comment by the spirit of the text is the true and characteristic merit of Mr. Scott's *exegesis*. Except by having the Bible by heart, or in the heart, it would be impossible for any uninspired man to take a view so wide in its range, and so boundless in its variety, of the position of the people of Christ, as betrayed by a corrupt nature, environed by temptations, beset by dangers, deluded by self-deceits, assailed by the powers of darkness, and, in the midst of all the affections and employments, the joys and the sorrows of life, continually summoned to exercises of duty and of self-control. No man, unless so qualified, could have produced so comprehensive a development of the relations between Deity, contemplated in a unity of essence and a trinity of persons, and man, contemplated as the object of His creative, redeeming, and sanctifying energy; or of the relations subsisting between different men, contemplated as members of one spiritual body; or of the claims, the obligations, and the privileges resulting from all those relations at once so awful, so mysterious, and so inextricably complicated with each other. Without the use of scientific formularies, he has thus brought together a complete body of divinity. Without aspiring to logical exactness, he has compiled a complete system of ethics. Without affecting the character of a philosopher, he has solved most of the familiar, and some of the more recondite problems of moral, social, and political philosophy. His great difficulty was, and wonderful are the efforts with which he encountered it, to revolve through every part of this mighty orbit with an eye at once steadfastly compassing the whole, keeping in view the connection of the several parts, and surveying each in its due subordination to the rest.

The biblical spirit of Mr. Scott's mind placed him at the distance of the poles from the neologists of a later day. He accepted every word of either Testament with the same prostrate reverence of soul with which the author of the Apocalypse bowed himself down when 'he heard the voice saying to him, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter."' The doctors of Germany, and those other doctors by whom Oxford is now replacing her Anglo-Catholic professors of divinity, must of course look down from their cloudy tabernacles with pity, if not with contempt, on Thomas Scott, as he submissively plods his way along the ancient paths with an unhesitating belief in the literal and plenary inspiration of every word of each of the sixty-six books, which collectively we call the Bible. His great work will, indeed, be consigned by such critics to the limbo of empty toils, and ponderous vanities. But in bar of that judgment his advocates will plead that the Bible, as expounded by the all-believing Thomas Scott, left on his heart and



life a more vivid image of Him who is the alpha and the omega of those sacred writings, than was ever impressed on any half-believing, half-rejecting interpreter, who has pyrrhonised them into a series of mythes — that the disciples of Scott have borne the same similitude more vividly than any who have sat at the feet of our neologian Gamaliels — and that no ordinary presumption arises in favour of the superiority of that spiritual culture which has thus yielded fruits of so much greater excellence.

Mr. Scott did not live to finish his Concordance, though he published many other books. They consisted chiefly of sermons or of homiletical essays, designed to guide the conscience and the conduct, and to regulate the affections, of those who, with or without reason, call and profess themselves Christians. These publications might pass for so many fragments accidentally broken off from the author's great work, for they have the same general character. But in his later years he changed his theological pursuits and style, and presented himself to the world as a controversialist and an ecclesiastical historian.

His antagonist was Dr. Prettyman Tomline, successively tutor, secretary, and biographer of William Pitt, Bishop of Lincoln, and Bishop of Winchester—a studious pains-taking man, the spoilt child of fortune, who bestowed on him boundless wealth and dignity; but less favoured by nature, who refused him the eminence to which he aspired in letters and theology. The mitre of Wykeham and of Andrews could not rescue him from a wearisome, lethargic mediocrity. As far as his acceptance at the temple of fame is concerned, arrogance, impertinence, blundering, or heresy, would have been more venial faults.

After long research, the bishop had convinced himself, and undertook to convince the world, that the doctrines of election, predestination, and final perseverance, with other cognate tenets, composing, collectively, the Calvinistic system, where novelties of the Church of Geneva, and were not to be found either in Holy Writ, or in the works of any of the Fathers, or Doctors of the Church, before John Calvin. To this episcopal 'refutation of Calvinism' Mr. Scott opposed two octavo volumes of 'Remarks, in which the speculations and the narrative of the prelate are encountered front to front, as subversive not only of the institutes of the Swiss reformer, but of the foundations of the Christian faith. No final adjustment of this high debate is ever to be expected; nor is there the reasonable prospect even of an approach to such an adjustment, until it shall be transferred from the field of divinity, to the more appropriate arena of moral philosophy. The inspired writers teach morals, not moral science. They proceed on popular

assumptions, and make an unrestrained use of popular language. They keep as far aloof from ontology and psychology as from astronomy and optics. Their object is only to purify and to save the soul. The meaner office of explaining the secrets of nature, material or immaterial, they abandon to the schools. A man may be a perfect textuary, though altogether destitute of physics or metaphysics.

Heedless, therefore, of the discord of the pulpits, we may with reasonable safety acquiesce in the prevailing opinion of the philosophers, that a subordinate intelligence may, within the limit of its powers, exercise a will perfectly free, of which nevertheless every movement may, with infallible accuracy, have been foreseen by another and superior intelligence. When the mother raises her infant to her bosom, or when the guide conducts the caravan to the fountains in the desert, they both, with unerring certainty, foresee (that is, predestinate) that the infant, or the pilgrims, will forthwith slake their thirst, the free will of either being in each case the instrument by which that foresight or predestination is verified. But if we suppose a case in which the disparity of intellect is not finite, but infinite, the prescience of such a superior as to the use which, in any given circumstances, such an inferior will make of his free will, must also be infinite. The reflection of the mother, or of the guide, and the intuitions of the Omniscient, alike accomplish their purposes, and alike fulfil their predestinations, through the agency of the volitions of the objects of their care. In a world where the whole system of life is carried on by means of such foresights, it seems strange that we should be perplexed with the inquiry, whether a similar dominion can be exercised over us by the prescience of our Supreme Ruler, compatibly with our possession of a choice in the dilemmas to which we are continually reduced. The debate regarding predestination, would indeed have assumed far less importance in the minds of the disputants themselves, had it not been for its inevitable connexion with the far more arduous debate how to reconcile the divine perfections with the existence of sin and sorrow within any province of the divine empire. The complete solution of that inquiry is for some better and holier state than ours, in which let us hope that the bishop and his antagonist have long since met to discover and to adore it.

Mr. Scott's historical labours are comprised in a brief account of the acts of the Synod of Dort, in which he undertook to correct the errors into which Bishop Tomline had fallen, by relying on Heylin's abridgment of them instead of consulting the originals. To this defence of the Protestant divines of the seventeenth century, he added a confession of his own faith on the much agitated questions

of the terms of religious communion, of religious liberty, and of toleration. He taught that the removal of the disabilities affecting the Roman Catholics, would be not only a great political blunder, but a grievous sin ; and while he attacked Judaism in the writings of a certain Rabbi Crool, he defended Christianity against the far more celebrated Thomas Paine. Like most other voluminous authors, he also dallied with many subjects on which it was not permitted to him to enter ; such, for example, as prophecy, and the Christian ministry. But no man could better afford such disappointments. His Commentary survives him, the enduring monument to his name, or rather (for such was his own view of it) a monument which he was graciously permitted to erect, to the edification of the Church, and to the glory of her great Head, in every region of the world in which the Word of God is now studied by Englishmen or their descendants, or shall hereafter be proclaimed in their mother tongue.

The inscription on the tomb of Pope Gregory the Great, '*Implebatque actu quicquid sermone docebat,*' proves, if it be true, that the great Roman Catholic Saint never taught, for it is certain that he never fulfilled, the most important of all human duties—those of parental and of conjugal life. But the virtues of Thomas Scott were exhibited in all the domestic relations, as his teaching extended to them all. He was an illustrious example of the great truth that the sublimest heights of Christian perfection are best scaled by ascending through the deepest and purest of our earthly affections to the love of God himself ; and that he who turns aside from the lower, will scarcely ever rise to the more elevated, of the two 'kindred points of heaven and home.'

Yet Scott did not seem, on a casual acquaintance, well suited for the interchange of the kindly offices of domestic life. His appearance was harsh and uninviting, his features coarse, his eye lacking lustre, his gait uncouth, his voice asthmatic and dissonant, and his manner absent and inattentive, like that of a student who had been dragged by violence from his mute associates into a reluctant intercourse with his fellow-men. Nor can it be denied that his natural temper was characterised by asperity and arrogance. In his pulpit he too often seemed to scold, and in society to dogmatise. But beneath this rough surface the seeds of every Christian grace were constantly germinating, and their energy became more and more prolific as the time drew near when they were to be transplanted into the paradise of God, there to bloom in perennial beauty.

Mr. Scott was an unpopular, and, on the whole, an unsuccessful, preacher. He trusted to one hour's peripatetic musing for the

preparation of his sermons, and to the impulse of the moment for the composition of them—errors so glaring, as to derive no justification, and scarcely any apology, from any fulness of mind or powers of eloquence. But to eloquence in any of the senses of the word, he had not the most remote claim. He found in his Bible declarations of the efficacy of preaching, and, in reliance on them, he persevered from youth to old age in delivering seldom less than three, and usually four, discourses on each Sunday, neither deterred by hostile criticism—nor disgusted by the frivolity of the fashionable triflers whose nerves he had offended—nor damped by the perversity of some of his hearers, or by the scandalous disgrace of others—nor disheartened by the gradual decline of his congregation—nor dispirited by finding himself at last the pastor of one of the most wretched of country villages, inhabited by persons little raised above pauperism, and not exceeding seventy in number. And this heroic confidence was vindicated by the event. His preaching, indeed, had no power over the multitude; but there was a little company, some of whom always sat reverently at his feet, to gather the rich ore of scriptural wisdom and ponderous sense, to which they afterwards imparted more attractive forms, and so gave it circulation amongst auditors more fastidious than themselves, though less discerning.

Mr. Scott was not naturally a social man. His table-talk was exhilarating neither to himself nor to others, although the vigour of his mind would now and then break out into a proverbial terseness of phrase, and a homely quaintness of illustration, which had something of the character, and of the effect, of humour. His colloquial fame must rest on a very different ground. Those with whom he lived were, in his eyes, the joint heirs with himself of the same eternal inheritance, and his associates in the same arduous probation. He therefore poured himself out in a discourse which, though thoughtful and profoundly serious, was kind and affectionate, giving assurance of the depth from which it sprang by the height at which it aimed. We have no right to expect a playful, an amusing, or a tender companion in a guardian appointed to minister to us frail mortals in our conflicts with temptation and sorrow. A compassionate and watchful kindness satisfies the duties of such a relation, and in such kindness Mr. Scott was never wanting.

He was a poor, and even a necessitous man. His annual income, professional and literary, seldom approached 200*l.*, and usually amounted to but half that sum. But the great interpreter of Holy Scripture was rich in his knowledge of the full meaning of the promise which he found there — ‘ Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you ; ’



and therefore he dared to cast himself and his family on the divine fidelity, rejecting preferment which his conscience forbade him to accept, and never swerving from any principle in order to propitiate the favour, or to avert the displeasure, of the dispensers of popularity and patronage. He lived in severe frugality, in brave independence, and in a self-denying charity to those who were still poorer than himself. When he had exhausted all other means of assisting them, he stooped (it is difficult to suppose a more painful condescension) to convert his house into a sort of public kitchen, where he and his distressed neighbours could partake together of a cheap diet, purchased at their joint expense, but prepared and served at his own charge, seasoned with his cordial greeting, and animated by his wise and gracious conversation.

Around that humble board were gathered three sons and one daughter. From the same divine promise he had derived the habitual assurance (how often beyond the reach of the most affluent !) that nothing necessary for the real welfare of his children should be withholden from them. A whole library of treatises on education might be studied to less advantage than his brief and simple account of the method by which he trained them up to tread in his own footsteps. In his household, punishment, rebuke, and even direct admonition, were almost unknown. His children listened from day to day to prayers offered with seriousness and singleness of heart, and to conversation which, though not apparently, was yet studiously, directed to raise their minds to the comprehension and the love of whatsoever things are true and honest, just and pure, lovely and of good report. From day to day the tempers and the habits of their parents bore an irresistible testimony to the perfect sincerity with which those prayers were offered, and that language employed. It was a healthful moral atmosphere in which his children grew up. With the keen instinct of their age they watched the congruity of the discourse and the conduct of their teachers. With the ductility of youth they imitated what they thus perceived to be the genuine character of their parents ; and their earliest thoughts of the enjoyments and comforts of life became indestructibly associated with the remembrance of the integrity of those through whose hands those blessings were imparted to them.

Thus, rich in an imperishable faith in human piety and virtue, Mr. Scott's sons all became clergymen, and were all devoted to the diffusion of the doctrines which their father had taught. John Scott, the eldest of them, published a biography of his father. It is a narrative which probably no human being ever read without some salutary compunction. It is no monkish legend of super-

stitious observances, of cruel self-tormentings, or of romantic miracles. It tells of no prodigies of penitence, nor of any feats of preternatural virtue. It shows how a divine and undying light, fed by the pure word of God, and nourished by constant prayer and meditation, may shine into the heart, and illuminate the path, and gladden the humble roof and the happy household, of one of those to whom that Word is an abiding guide and comforter. It became the happy duty of his son to commemorate and to give to the world a legend of one saint at least worthy of that awful name, and to show with what force of intellect, what candour of mind, and what indefatigable diligence, he laboured to discover the whole will of God;—with what a burning zeal, and yet with what a tranquil energy, he strove to fulfil it;—how acutely he felt the troubles of life, and how bravely he endured them;—how constantly progressive, and at length how perfect, was his victory over the faults and infirmities of his nature;—with what brotherly kindness he laboured to promote the best interests of mankind;—with what filial affiance he committed himself to the guidance of his heavenly Father;—how he sanctified all the homely offices, all the dearest relations, and all the arduous duties of domestic life;—how profound, and yet how simple, was the unadorned wisdom which flowed so copiously from his pen and from his lips;—how unaverted and how confiding was the gaze which, during fifty successive years, he fixed on the holy life, and on the atoning death, of his Saviour;—and how, in the strength of a living union with Him, he fought the good fight of faith, and then passed through the dark waters, agitated but not overwhelmed, cast down, but not in despair; and at last made more than conqueror in the strength of that Divine Master, to whom his life had been consecrated, and to whom he committed his departing spirit in the sure and certain hope of a further revelation of the Divine Will, transcending, as the eternal Heavens transcend this perishing earth, that present revelation of it, which he had so laboriously studied and so devoutly loved.

Scott was not the only eminent theologian whom Newton could claim as his disciple or imitator. The work which occupied the life, and signalised the name, of Joseph Milner, originated in the example, if not in the suggestions, of the same master. Milner was the elder of the three sons of a wool-stapler at Leeds; but was educated at the University of Cambridge at the expense of a society instituted for the assistance of young students of remarkable intelligence and piety. Having been admitted into holy orders, he became one of the ministers of the High Church at Hull, and master of the endowed grammar-school at that town.

There he won for himself a permanent place in literature, and left a deep impress of his researches and opinions on the minds of his own, and of later generations.

In the course of his ministry those opinions underwent a change, which, in a brief memoir prefixed to a volume of his posthumous sermons, his surviving brother, Isaac, represented as radical and entire. It was a change which would be described, in popular language, as a passing over from the ranks of 'the orthodox' to those of 'the evangelical' clergy. For these conventional terms his biographer endeavours to substitute a more precise definition; but the readers of the memoir would seem with one voice to have declared their inability to attach any definite meaning to the explanation. The attempt was renewed still more elaborately in the second edition, but with no happier result. The fact was, that the distinction which Isaac Milner so ineffectually laboured to express, was, in theory at least, so subtle and evanescent, as to escape the bondage of any words whatever. Neither Crabbe, the synonymist, nor even Samuel Johnson, the lexicographer, could have discriminated exactly between the senses of two appellations, so equivocal in themselves, so tossed about by party spirit, and so continually shifting in their use.

The knot would perhaps have been best cut, by defining an orthodox clergyman as one who held, in dull and barren formality, the very same doctrines which the evangelical clergyman held in cordial and prolific vitality; or by saying, that they differed from each other as solemn triflers differ from the profoundly serious. It was a specific, not a generic distinction. It resulted from no assignable diversity in the elements of their respective creeds, nor from any dissimilarity in the manner in which, in either class, those elements affected, and united with, each other; but in the degree in which they were combined in each with that caloric — the vital heat of the soul itself — which quickens into animating motives the otherwise inert and torpid mass of doctrinal opinions.

The opinions of Joseph Milner, when thus vivified, gave birth to his 'History of the Church of Christ.' To the Roman Catholic inquiry, 'Where was your religion before Luther?' no very satisfactory answer had been returned by Protestant divines. Their counter inquiry, 'Where was your face before you washed it this morning?' was but a bad argument, thrown into the form of a sorry jest. If the hands by which such ablutions be performed be rude and violent, they may so wash the face as to lacerate the epidermis; just as the hard scouring of some ancient vase may destroy incrustations coeval with the work itself. Unskilful and presumptuous hands may tear

away an integral part of what they desire to amend, by mistaking it for an accidental and injurious accessory ; and such is the error or the offence which the antagonists of Luther ascribe to him. They maintain that the creeds and observances of which he despoiled the Church, belonged to the remotest ecclesiastical antiquity. They call upon their opponents to specify the time anterior to Luther, when she appeared among men without them, or when she was invested with those ceremonies, and those opinions, with which his hands arrayed her. They insist that, during a period of fifteen centuries, the confession of Augsburg and the ritual of Geneva would have appeared to all Christian people as so many strange innovations. They declare that at every successive era in that long lapse of ages, the Tridentine decrees would have sounded in Christian ears but as so many familiar expositions of established truths. They infer that there is, therefore, an irresistible presumption against the one, and in favour of the other.

John Newton undertook to refute these assertions, and the argument thus founded on them. In his 'Observations on Ecclesiastical History,' he attempted to trace the Lutheran, or 'Evangelical' system, from the apostolic times, until it faded away before the growth of papal errors, in the sixth and following centuries. It was the deliberate judgment of his friend and critic William Cowper, that he had proved his superiority, in some of the essential qualities of an historian, to the author of the 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.' The world, however, did not affirm the sentence of the poet. With far greater learning, and much more ability, Joseph Milner devoted all the leisure of his life, and all the resources of his mind, to the accomplishment of Newton's design. He pledged himself to demonstrate that, from the days of Peter and of Paul, there had been an unbroken succession of Christian teachers and of Christian societies, among whom the eternal fire of gospel truth had burnt pure and undefiled by the errors which were abjured in the sixteenth century by the half of Christendom.

Milner's qualifications for this enterprise, were a respectable proficiency in classical knowledge ; a far wider acquaintance with the Greek and Latin fathers than was usual at that time and in this country ; an inflexible regard for truth ; an ardent attachment to the memory of those heroes of primitive piety, who were at once the witnesses and the ornaments of his cause ; and the command of a style, natural and perspicuous, and glowing with a devout reverence for whatever indicated the presence in the Church of her Supreme Head, and of her Holy Paraclete. He lived to complete the greater part of his plan, but left his account



of the German Reformation to be finished by his brother Isaac, and bequeathed to the most worthy, the privilege of bringing his history to an end. It fell, as we have seen, into the hands of John, the son of Thomas Scott.

The Church History of Joseph Milner is one of those books which may perish with some revolution of the moral and religious character of the English race, but hardly otherwise. For in a tone and manner eminently English, it contains the only extant attempt to deduce the theological genealogy of the British churches from those of which the Apostles were the immediate founders. Our national homage for antiquity, and for remote traditions, constrains us all, and some of us with undisguised reluctance, to attach a high value to our ecclesiastical ancestry, and to our inheritance, through them, of our religious opinions. 'The Bible, and the Bible only,' may be our rallying cry; but the 'quod semper, quod ubique,' &c, will never lose its hold on English imaginations, or on English hearts.

It appears to be the opinion of the most competent judges, that Milner was unable to establish the theory to which he was pledged. Indeed his own honest admissions are scarcely to be reconciled with that theory. If the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians was really understood by Tertullian, Cyprian, Basil, Chrysostom, Jerome, or by either Gregory, as it was understood by Martin Luther, it will follow that our Church historian was either most unfortunate in examining their writings, or most injudicious in reporting what he discovered in them. Whatever may be the truth, or whatever the antiquity, of the Lutheran doctrine of justification, Milner has not been able to prove that it held, in the theological system of those Fathers of the Church, the all-important work assigned to it by the great Reformer, or by the incomparably greater Apostle.

That this polar star of our faith underwent a protracted and almost a total eclipse, is one of those strange and obstinate facts which the inquiries of Milner ascertained, and which his integrity has virtually acknowledged. The explanation of that phenomenon we suppose to be, that the vital energy of this doctrine has ever consisted rather in the negation of error, than in the affirmation of any positive truth,—that, with the reappearance of the opposite delusion, the Pauline and Lutheran doctrine has ever reasserted its dominion,—and that with the disappearance, or supposed disappearance, of that heresy, the antagonist doctrine has always fallen into comparative disregard.

Thus, the Jewish people assumed that the Deity considered them alone as righteous or justified persons, and that He looked on the

rest of the children of men as cursed with an indelible reprobation. In defence of this opinion they urged that Abraham, their great progenitor, had transmitted to them promises, and that Moses, their great legislator, had given to them a law, from the benefits and obligations of which the rest of mankind were excluded. This exclusive privilege was claimed, on the same grounds, by the early Jewish Christians, except that they acknowledged that heathen converts to the Gospel, who should submit to the law of Moses, and conform to the Mosaic ritual, might also find a place among the righteous or 'justified.' To refute this fatal error, St. Paul taught negatively that no man could be justified by the works of the law, and affirmatively that men could be justified only by the all-sanctifying influence of faith, — that is, by living habitually in that state of mind, in which the remote is converted into the present, and the unseen into the visible.

With the overthrow of the Jewish economy came the disappearance of this Judaical illusion. The apostolic protests against it having accomplished their purpose, ceased to retain their original significance and value. The doctors of the Church dismissed from their writings and their homilies, what they regarded as an obsolete warning against an exploded error. But when errors kindred to that of the Jewish people sprang up in the Christian Church, the protestation of Paul was also revived to negative and to combat them. His reasoning with the Galatians was quoted against the corresponding fallacies of their own times, by Augustine, by the early Paulicians, by the Waldenses, by Grossetête, by Wicliffe, by Huss, and by Luther. For, in the times of each of them, the Deity was again represented by the priesthood, and was again regarded by the laity, as contemplating the whole human family as outcasts from his presence, with the exception of those only who were recipients of sacerdotal chrisms, indulgences, and absolutions, and who were observant of a certain discipline, ritual, and routine of external duties. They, and they only, were, according to this creed, esteemed by their Creator as righteous or 'justified' persons. The lie of Luther's day was but the revival, in another form, of the lie of the day of Paul of Tarsus, and Luther's contradiction to it was the distinct echo of the contradiction with which it had been met by the great Apostle. Among the fathers of the first three centuries, the same echo was raised faintly and indistinctly, and at length died away altogether, because in those centuries the lie was uttered in tones too low and indistinct to wound the ears of the guardians of the faith, amidst the din of persecutions from without, and of other controversies from within. It is true, indeed, that the father of lies and his children will always labour to propagate the falsehood, that

the divine favour is to be won by burthensome rites, and by certain external and visible acts. At every period, the ministers of truth must therefore denounce the fallacy, as Paul and as Luther denounced it. The absence of such denunciations in the theological writings of any age will prove, not that the champions of Truth had deserted her cause, but that the advocates of Error had desisted from asserting her pretensions — not that the doctrine of justification by faith had been abandoned by the holy and the wise, but that the doctrine of justification by works had not been inculcated by the carnal and the foolish.

Although for this reason, as we believe, Milner was unable to discover much to his immediate purpose in the earlier literature of the Church, yet his diligence in turning up that long-neglected soil, was repaid by an abundant harvest. Though he failed to discover any frequent republication of the apostolic doctrine respecting the piacular inefficacy of any outward acts, and respecting the saving efficacy of that spiritual state which is designated by the word Faith, he succeeded in tracing the deep workings of that vital energy in the meditations, in the writings, in the lives, and in the deaths of a long and illustrious lineage in which the martyrs, the confessors, and the fathers of antiquity are connected by an unbroken and indissoluble chain with the reformers and the missionaries of these later ages. He ascertained that there had been a constant succession of holy men, who, amidst great differences of judgment and still wider diversities of language, had lived and died in the power of the same faith, maintaining the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. He showed that men might live very wisely while they reasoned very absurdly, — that much practical sanctity was consistent with much theoretical error, — that the victims of many strange superstitions might yet have within them the living fountains of eternal life, — and that to a head impervious to a syllogism, might be united a heart penetrated with the love of God and with the love of man. In the Catholic Church he found a place for not a few Roman Catholics. He discerned that faith in Christ had been the ruling principle, and the image of Christ the acquired likeness, of many, whom a sterner or more ignorant judge would have condemned as benighted idolators or bewildered formalists.

A noble enterprise and an invaluable conclusion! Though Milner has been surpassed by a host of writers in explaining the relations of the Church with the world, and in recording the occurrences which advanced or retarded her progress to worldly domination, and although he is but an infant in the grasp of his great German rivals in the history of religious opinions, and of the

influence of the philosophical sects on the Church, and though it is impossible to assign to him any rank at all as a philosophical, luminous, graphic, or animated historian, yet this praise is exclusively his own—he gave the true answer to the taunting inquiry, 'Where was your religion before Luther?' He demonstrated that it dwelt, if not formally, yet substantially, in the souls, and that it was manifested, if not without some dross of human infirmity, yet with distinctness, in the lives, of a long succession of saints, canonised or uncanonised, reaching backwards from the sixteenth to the first century of the Christian era; each of whom, could he have seen the days of the monk of Wittenberg, would have hailed him as a brother, would have joined in his devotions, would have sympathised with his hopes, and would have acknowledged that the foundation of their and of his faith was the same, notwithstanding the seeming inconsistency of their creeds, and the wide dissimilarity of their respective rituals.

If that posthumous intercourse between the ancient and the modern worthies of the Church Catholic could have been carried onward from Luther himself to his followers in the Anglican Church, the mighty dead would have greeted none of them with more cordiality than Henry Venn, the last of her four great 'Evangelical' fathers. Vast as is the interval, which, in the estimate of the world, must ever separate heroic from other men, yet, to eyes purged and strengthened like those of such imaginary visitors to discern in the human heart those dormant germs of moral grandeur, which, under the genial influence of meet occasion, would have borne luxuriant fruit, he would have appeared as belonging potentially to that order of mankind, among whom the highest and most conspicuous place belonged actually to Martin Luther.

All the paternal ancestors of Henry Venn, from the Reformation to his own birth, in the reign of George II., had been in holy orders, and several of them had been eminent for piety, zeal, or learning. His father, Richard, was remarkable for his successful opposition to the appointment to the see of Gloucester of Dr. Rundle, whose theology was so liberal, as at length to have dissolved into a creed, to which any man might assent, who did not dissent from theism. The story is told with great effect in Lord Hervey's memoirs, with the addition that Rundle, after having been rejected by the Church of England, was thrust by Walpole on the Church of Ireland, where, of course, no defender of the faith arose to dispute his pretensions to the mitre. Henry, the son of Richard, adopting the hereditary profession of his family, became successively Vicar of Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, and Rector of Yelling,



a small village in the county of Huntingdon. Failing health compelled him to abandon the first of these cures, after an incumbency of twelve years, and the second, after twenty-years' continuance in it. He died in the year 1797, beneath the roof of his son, John Venn, who having, like himself, observed the law of his house, was then in the possession of the rectory, and residing at the parsonage of Clapham, in Surrey. Faithful to the example of his progenitors, and therefore sustaining the same clerical office, Henry, the son of John Venn, has recently published a brief memoir of his grandfather, a collection of his letters, and a new edition of his 'Complete Duty of Man,' the book on which his fame as an author and a theologian principally depends. His celebrity as a minister of the Gospel rests on traditions which are not likely soon to die away; and was not long since resting on the personal recollections of some few aged men and women in Yorkshire, whose hearts and lips overflowed as often as they could find any one to listen to their accounts of the apostolical teacher, by whom they had been guided in youth into those paths of pleasantness, which, even in decrepitude and decay, they still found to be the ways of peace.

Those traditions, and the writings of Henry Venn, are calculated to excite thoughts far more befitting the silence of a solitary evening's walk than the noise and excitement of the press. His venerable image seems to look upbraidingly on any attempt to delineate himself or his works in a spirit less devout than his own, or less exclusively consecrated to the glory of God and to the well-being of mankind. Yet, it can hardly be at variance with those great objects of his life to record of him, that he was one of the most eminent examples of one of the most uncommon of human excellencies—the possession of perfect and uninterrupted mental health. As all the chords of a well-tuned harp, or as all the organs of a well-ordered body, so all the faculties of a well-constituted mind, contribute, each in its due place and measure, to that harmony which is the essence at once of all effective action, and of all salutary repose. In this sense of the words, Henry Venn was 'made whole,' first by Nature, or that divine patrimony with which we enter on our present state of being; and then by Providence, or that divine beneficence which directs and blesses our progress through life. The congruity of his intellectual powers was not marred by any discord in his affections, nor did either reason or passion ever abdicate or usurp in his mind the separate provinces over which they were respectively commissioned to reign. There prevailed throughout the whole man, a certain symphony which enabled him to possess his soul in order, in energy, and in

composure. And as, in all great social enterprises, the perfection of the success depends on the completeness of the concert between the various co-operating agents, so in individual life, perfection can result only from the absolute accord, and the mutual support, of the various springs of action which animate the solitary agent. Those qualities which are antagonistic in most men, were consentient in him; and his talents, though separately of no very exalted order, became, by their habitual concurrence, of very singular efficacy. Thus, his athletic sense was associated with a keen taste for the beautiful, and with a quick perception of the ludicrous. Though dwelling amidst the most sublime devotional elevations, his oral and epistolary discourse on those mysterious topics, was characterised by perfect simplicity and transparent clearness. With a well-stored memory, he was an independent, if not an original, thinker. With deep and even vehement attachments, he knew how to maintain on fit occasions, even towards those whom he loved best, a judicial gravity, and even a judicial sternness. He acted with indefatigable energy in the throng of men, and yet, in solitude, could meditate with unwearied perseverance. He was at once a preacher, at whose voice multitudes wept or trembled, and a companion to whose privacy the wise resorted for instruction, the wretched for comfort, and all for sympathy. In all the exigencies and in all the relations of life, the firmest reliance might always be placed on his counsels, his support, and his example. Like St. Paul, he became all things to all men; and, for the same reason, that he might by any means save some. For the concentration of all his desires on that one object, bore the double relation of cause and of effect to that concentration of thought and oneness of mind by which he was distinguished. Keeping that single end continually in view, he made all the resources within his reach at all times tributary to it.

To Henry Venn, therefore, among the 'Evangelical' clergy, belonged, as by an inherent right, the province which he occupied of giving to the world a perfect and continuous view of their system of Christian ethics. The sacred consonance of all the passages of his own life, and the uniform convergence of them all towards one great design, rendered his conceptions of duty eminently pure, large and consistent; gave singular acuteness to his discernment of moral error; and imparted a rich and cordial unction to his persuasions to obedience.

The Anglican Church already possessed, in the 'Whole Duty of Man,' a treatise on what Bentham calls 'deontology,' remarkable for the idiomatic force of its style, for the extent of its popularity, and for the darkness which envelopes its true authorship. But to

Mr. Venn, and to his brethren, it appeared so defective, in the pursuit of morality downwards to its deep and only sure foundation, that he thought it necessary, not only to lay the basis anew, but also to erect again the superstructure, with all the variations and additions consequent on that fundamental change. The '*Complete Duty of Man*' has ever since rivalled, if it has not surpassed, the fame and the acceptance of the '*Whole Duty of Man*,' and is still one of those few books of which the benefits are never unfelt, of which the love never abates, and of which the republication is never long intermitted. Even in our own age of literary voluptuousness, it retains the undiminished favour of many classes of readers, although no sacrifice is made in it to gratify the tastes of any class. It was written from the soul, and therefore to the soul; from a full heart, and therefore with genuine tenderness; from a profound sense of responsibility, and therefore with the deepest seriousness; from a full mind, and therefore with no perceptible regard to mere words; from the most mature experience, and therefore in a tone which never falters, and in a style perfectly artless, unrestrained, and perspicuous. He might have borrowed for this and for all his writings, from his friend, John Newton, the title of *Cardiphonia*.

They have passed to their account, these holy men of the eighteenth century; and it is neither without the appearance, nor the consciousness, of presumption, that these attempts are made to discriminate between them, and to assign to each his appropriate claims to the gratitude of a later age. All such judgments must be more or less conjectural, resting on those slight and imperfect indications of character, which can be discovered in their extant writings, or in the brief notices in which their contemporaries have celebrated them. But after every allowance shall have been made for these sources of error, enough will remain to convince any impartial inquirer, that the first generation of the clergy designated as 'Evangelical,' were the second founders of the Church of England—that if not entitled to the praise of genius, of eloquence, or of profound learning, they were devout, sincere, and genuine men—that the doctrines of the New Testament were to them a reality, and the English liturgy a truth—that their public ministrations and their real meaning were in exact coincidence—that they rose as much above the *Hoalleian* formality as above the *Marian* superstition—that they revived amongst us the spirit of Paul and Peter, of Augustine and Boniface, of Wicliffe and Ridley, of Baxter and Howe,—that they burned with a loyal and enlightened zeal for the kingdom of Christ, and for those eternal verities on which that kingdom is founded—that their personal sanctity rose to the

same elevation as their theological opinions—and that in all these respects they formed a contrast, as cheering in one light as it was melancholy in another, to the spirit which, in that age, characterised their clerical brethren. On the other hand, the coincidence with the spirit and the doctrines of the Methodists, and especially of Whitfield, was such as to forbid the belief that there existed no other relations between the two bodies, but that of a simultaneous existence. It has already, indeed, been shown, that Newton was the disciple of Whitfield, that Scott was the disciple of Newton, and that Milner was his imitator; and it would be easy to show that Venn lived in a long and friendly intercourse with the great Itinerant, and officiated with him in places of public worship which rejected episcopal controul.

But the 'Evangelical Fathers,' bound as they were to the Church of England by their vows, and deeply attached to her ordinances, had neither the power nor the wish to emulate the 'Fathers of Methodism,' by establishing a new ecclesiastical polity. The line of demarcation between them and the other Anglican clergy, being therefore indicated by no corresponding difference of government, of confessions, or of ritual, gradually became less and less definite, until at length it had been almost wholly obliterated. No one man of commanding genius arose to lay the foundation of a new spiritual dynasty; and no religious system can ever acquire a corporate perpetuity, or long retain a continuous succession, which does not commence in some such personal unity. No scholars arose among them, illustrious for learning, nor any authors to whom the homage of the world at large has been rendered; and without such an aristocracy, no intellectual commonwealth can long flourish. Their theology, also, revolved so much on a very few central points, as to induce a disastrous facility in catching a superficial acquaintance with it, and in reproducing it in a plausible imitation. Popular applause, neither carefully measured, nor always well merited, rewarded any eminent success in the advocacy of their peculiar tenets; and they were early taught the deep truth of the remark of Tacitus—'Pessimum inimicorum genus, laudantes.'

Gradually, also, it came to pass in the Evangelical, as in other societies, that the symbol was adopted by many who were strangers to the spirit of the original institution;—by many an indolent, trivial, or luxurious aspirant to its advantages, both temporal and eternal. The terms of membership had never been definite or severe. Whitfield and his followers had required from those who joined their standard neither the practice of any peculiar austerities, nor the adoption of any new ritual, nor the abandonment of any established ceremonies, nor an irksome submission to eccle-



siastical authority, nor the renunciation of any reputable path to eminence or to wealth. The distinguishing tenets were few and easily learned; the necessary observances neither onerous nor unattended with much pleasurable emotion. In the lapse of years the discipline of the society imperceptibly declined, and errors coeval with its existence exhibited themselves in an exaggerated form. When country gentlemen and merchants, lords spiritual and temporal, and even fashionable ladies gave in their adhesion; their dignities uninvaded, their ample expenditure flowing chiefly in its accustomed channels, and their saloons as crowded, if not as brilliant, as before, the spirit of Whitfield was to be traced among his followers, not so much in the burning zeal and self-devotion of that extraordinary man, as in his insubordination to episcopal rule, and in his unquenchable thirst for spiritual excitement. Although the fields and the market-places no longer echoed to the voice of the impassioned preacher and the hallelujahs of enraptured myriads, yet spacious theatres, sacred to such uses, received a countless host to harangue or to applaud, to recount or to hear adventures of stirring interest, to listen to exhortations for propagating the Christian faith to the furthest recesses of the globe, to drop the superfluous guinea, and to retire with feelings strangely balanced between the human and the divine, the glories of heaven and the vanities of earth.

And then, in obedience to the general law of human affairs, arrived the day of reaction. A new race of students had grown up at Oxford. They were men of unsullied, and even severe virtue; animated by a devotion which, if not very fervent, was at least genuine and grave; conversant with classical literature, and not without pretensions, more or less considerable, to an acquaintance with Christian antiquity. As they paced thoughtfully along those tall avenues, to which, a hundred years before, Whitfield and the Wesleys had been accustomed to retire for meditation, they recoiled, with a mixture of aversion and contempt, from the image of the crowded assemblages, and the dramatic exercises, in which the successors of those great men in the Church of England were performing so conspicuous a part. They revolved, not without indignation, the intellectual barrenness with which that Church had been stricken, from the time when her most popular teachers had not merely been satisfied to tread the narrow circle of the 'Evangelical' theology, but had exulted in that bondage as indicating their possession of a purer light than had visited the other ministers of the Gospel. They invoked, with an occasional sigh, but not without many a bitter smile, the reappearance amongst us of a piety more profound and masculine, more meek and con-

templative. They believed that such a change in the religious character of their age and country was a divine command, and that a commission had been given to themselves to carry it into effect.

It happened that at this period Mr. Wordsworth had, at Oxford, a pupil and an imitator, who would have surpassed his master, if he could have attained to the exquisite felicities of his master's occasional and better style. The author of the 'Christian Year,' like the author of the 'Excursion,' inhabited a world in which the humblest objects, and the most familiar incidents, were symbolical of whatever is most elevated in things spiritual, and most remote from our experience in things invisible. In the tame suburbs, the dusty roads, and the busy streets of Oxford, Mr. Keble lived by imagination, not by sight. On every side they teemed for him with analogies and interpretations of the significance of her liturgical offices, of the mysteries of her priesthood, and of the temples erected by no human hands in the souls of her worshippers. When he transferred to the canvas the rich hues in which the sanctuary within the veil of common things was disclosed to his own eyes, he was accustomed to throw over the picture an atmosphere, which, however brilliant, was not seldom so hazy as to be almost impervious. What the Virgin Mother had been to the great painters of Italy, that the Anglican or Elizabethan Church became to him. Immaculate in conception, peerless in beauty, resplendent with every grace, she presented herself to him as a living personality to be loved and wooed, and as a divine impersonation to be adored and hymned.

No strains could be more grateful than these to the sensitive ears which had been wounded by the coarser sounds wafted from Exeter Hall to the banks of Isis; and it is one of the caprices of fortune, which, at the expense of the Professor of Poetry, has conferred on the Professor of Hebrew the honour of bestowing his patronymic on the league formed under the auspices of their common Alma Mater, against the 'Evangelical succession.' For, although the warfare of their holy alliance has chiefly been conducted in the lowlands of Prose, it commenced by an irruption of the invaders from the mountain tops of Poetry. From first to last, indeed, their assaults have been more or less Parnassian or Pegasæan. The same hands which wrought at the 'Tracts for the Times,' strung and swept the chords of the 'Lyra Apostolica.' In everything but rhythm, the tractarian essay was lyrical. In everything but tediousness, the apostolic lyre was tractarian. To each belonged the poetical privilege of escaping by a half sense, or by the half suggestion of a sense, or by words with no sense at all,

from the dilemma of Mr. Justice Shallow—‘If, sir, you come with news from the court, I take it, sir, there is but two ways, either to utter them or to conceal them.’

Mr. Newman was incomparably the most eminent of those tractarians, who chiefly used the instrument of prose. His theology differed from that of Mr. Keble, as a substance in a solidified form differs from itself when in a gaseous form. The style of each bore the impress of learning, and elevation of sanctity and tenderness, but was chargeable with that cloudiness or ambi-dexterity of meaning which David Hume denounced as the vilest of all the abuses of the gift of language. But these eminent writers were still more clearly identified by their unmasculine horror of everything vulgar in belief or in sentiment, and therefore of the ‘Evangelical’ tenets as vulgar beyond all other opinions, and of the ‘Evangelical’ teachers as vulgar beyond all other men. And as from Oxford had come forth Wicliffe, to subvert the spiritual power of Rome, and Whitfield, with a deluge of popular rhetoric, to overwhelm the hierarchy of England, so in the same venerable academy arose Messrs. Keble and Newman, to cast down the stronghold of Protestantism. But they came neither with conflagration nor with storm. The genius of refinement, fastidiousness, exclusion, and delicacy, attended, if it did not guide, their movements. They were therefore speedily encumbered by the throng who will always attach themselves to any leader who exhibits a supercilious contempt for the common herd, and stands haughtily aloof from it. But they were also followed by the crowd of aspirants after sacerdotal domination, and by that still larger crowd, who, not knowing how to distinguish between the right and the duty of private judgment, are rejoiced to repudiate both the one and the other, as burdens beyond their strength.

It therefore came to pass, in the Oxonian, as in other leagues, that the head moved forward by the impulse of the tail. Step by step in their progress, ‘the Church,’ whom they worshipped, changed her attitude and her aspect. She soon disclaimed her Elizabethan or statutory origin, and then made vehement efforts to escape from her Elizabethan or statutory ceremonial. She assumed the title, and laid claim to the character, of the Primitive Church, or the Church of the Fathers, and at length arrogated to herself the prerogatives of that Catholic or universal church, which ‘lifts her mitred front in courts and palaces,’ whether at Rome, at Moscow, or at Lambeth, but whose presence is never vouchsafed to any who cannot trace back from apostolic hands an episcopal succession.

At this stage of the history of the Oxonian league, its progress

was quickened and animated by the panic which exhibited itself from one end to the other of the hostile camp. The disciples of Whitfield and of Wesley united to those of Newton and Scott, of Milner and of Venn, and, reinforced by the whole strength of the Nonconformists, began to throw up along the whole field of controversy entrenchments for their own defence, and batteries for the annoyance of their assailants. Amongst the literary missiles cast by the contending hosts against each other, there are few better worth the study of those who wish to estimate the probable result of the conflict, than the life of Richard Hurrell Froude. It was launched from a catapult under the immediate direction of Messrs. Keble and Newman themselves, and, though it is a book of no great inherent value, it has a considerable interest as the only biography which the world possesses, of a confessor of Oxford Catholicism. It contains a vivid picture of the discipline, the studies, the opinions, and the mental habits of his fraternity, and is published by the two great fathers of that school, with the avowal of their 'own general coincidence' in the opinions and feelings of their disciple. We have thus a delineation at full length of one of those divines who are to effect the conquest which was attempted in vain by the Bellarmines and the Bossuets of former times. If it teaches us nothing else, this biography will at least teach us what is the real extent and urgency of the danger which has so much disturbed the tranquillity of the guardians of the Protestant faith of England.

Richard Hurrell Froude was born, as we read, on the 'Feast of the Annunciation,' in the year 1803, and died in 1836. He was an Etonian, a fellow of Oriel College, a priest in holy orders of the Church of England, the writer of unsuccessful prize essays, and of journals, letters, and sermons; an occasional contributor to the periodical literature of his theological associates; and, during the last four years of his life, an invalid in search of health, either in the south of Europe or in the West Indies.

Such are all the incidents of a life to the commemoration of which two octavo volumes have been dedicated. A more intractable story, if regarded merely as a narrative, was never undertaken. But Mr. Froude left behind him a great collection of papers, which affection would have committed to the fire, though party spirit has given them to the press. The most unscrupulous publisher of diaries and private correspondence never offered for sale a self-analysis more frank or less prepossessing. But the world is invited to gaze on this suicidal portraiture on account of 'the extreme importance of the views, to the development of which the whole is meant to be subservient,' and in order that they may



not lose 'the instruction derivable from a full exhibition of his character as a witness to those views. Heavy as are the penalties which the editors of these volumes have incurred for their disclosure of the infirmities of their friend, the world will probably absolve them, if they will publish more of the letters which he appears to have received from his mother, and to have transmitted to them. One such letter which they have rescued from oblivion, is worth far more than all which they have published of her son's. Though both the parent and the child have long since been withdrawn from the reach of this world's judgment, it yet seems almost an impiety to transcribe her estimate of his early character, and to add that the less favourable anticipations which she drew from her study of him in youth, were but too distinctly verified in his riper years. She read his heart with a mother's sagacity, and thus revealed it to himself with a mother's tenderness and truth.

'From his very birth his temper has been peculiar; pleasing, intelligent, and attaching, when his mind was undisturbed, and he was in the company of people who treated him reasonably and kindly; but exceedingly impatient under vexatious circumstances; very much disposed to find his own amusement in teasing and vexing others; and almost entirely incorrigible when it was necessary to reprove him. I never could find a successful mode of treating him. Harshness made him obstinate and gloomy; calm and long displeasure made him stupid and sullen; and kind patience had not sufficient power over his feelings to force him to govern himself. After a statement of such great faults, it may seem an inconsistency to say, that he nevertheless still bore about him strong marks of a promising character. In all points of substantial principle his feelings were just and high. He had (for his age) an unusually deep feeling of admiration for every thing which was good and noble; his relish was lively, and his taste good, for all the pleasures of the imagination; and he was also quite conscious of his own faults, and (untempted) had a just dislike to them.'

Exercising a stern and absolute dominion over all the baser passions, with a keen perception of the beautiful in nature and in art, and a deep homage for the sublime in morals; imbued with the spirit of the classical authors, and delighting in the exercise of talents which, though they fell far short of excellence, rose as far above mediocrity, Mr. Froude might have seemed to want no promise of an honourable rank in literature, or of distinction in his sacred office. His career was intercepted by a premature death; but enough is recorded to show that his aspirations, however noble, must have been defeated by the pride and moroseness which his mother's wisdom detected, and which her love disclosed to him;

united as they were to a constitutional distrust of his own powers, and a weak reliance on other minds for guidance and support. A spirit at once haughty and unsustained by genuine self-confidence; subdued by the stronger will or intellect of other men, and glorying in that subjection; regarding the opponents of his masters with an intolerance exceeding their own; and, in the midst of all his animosity towards others, turning with no infrequent indignation on itself, — might form the basis of a good dramatic sketch, of which Mr. Froude might not unworthily sustain the burden. But a 'dialogue of the dead,' in which George Whitfield and Richard Froude should be the interlocutors, would be a more appropriate channel for illustrating the practical uses of 'the Second Reformation,' and of the Catholic Restoration,' which it is the object of their respective biographies to illustrate. Rhadamanthus having dismissed them from his tribunal, they would compare together their juvenile admiration of the drama, their ascetic discipline at Oxford, their early dependence on stronger or more resolute minds, their propensity to self-observation and to self-portraiture, their contemptuous opinions of the negro race, and the surprise with which they witnessed the worship of the Church of Rome in lands where it is still triumphant. So far all is peace, and the *concordes animæ* exchange such greetings as pass between disembodied spirits. But when the tidings brought by the new denizen of the Elysian fields to the reformer of the eighteenth century, reach his affrighted shade, the regions of the blessed are disturbed by an unwonted discord; and the fiery soul of Whitfield blazes with intense desire to resume his wanderings through the earth, and to lift up his voice against the new apostasy.

It was with no unmanly dread of the probe, but from want of skill or leisure to employ it, that the self-scrutiny of Whitfield seldom or never penetrated much below the surface. Preach he must; and when no audience could be brought together, he seized a pen and preached to himself. The uppermost feeling, be it what it may, is put down in his journal honestly, vigorously, and devoutly. Satan is menaced and upbraided. Intimations from heaven are recorded, without one painful doubt of their origin. He prays and exults, anticipates the future with delight, looks back to the past with thankfulness, blames himself simply because he thinks himself to blame, despairs of nothing, fears nothing, and has not a moment's ill-will to any human being.

Mr. Froude conducts his written soliloquies in a different spirit. His introverted gaze analyses with elaborate minuteness the various motives at the confluence of which his active powers receive their impulse, and, with perverted sagacity, pursues the self-examination,

until, bewildered in the dark labyrinth of his own nature, he escapes to the cheerful light of day by locking up his journal. 'A friend' (whose real name is as distinctly intimated under its initial letter, as if it were written at length) 'advises burning confessions. I cannot make up my mind to that,' observes the penitent; 'but I think I can see many points in which it will be likely to do me good to be cut off for some time from these records.' On such a subject the author of 'The Christian Year' was entitled to greater deference. That bright ornament of the *College de Propagandâ* at Oxford had also gazed on his own heart through the mental microscope, till he had learnt the danger of the excessive use of it. While admonishing men to approach their Creator not as isolated beings, but as members of the Universal Church, and while aiding the inmates of her hallowed courts to worship in strains so pure, so reverent, and so meek, as to answer not unworthily to the voice of hope and reconciliation in which she is addressed by her Divine Head, this 'sweet singer' had so brooded over the evanescent processes of his own spiritual nature, as not seldom to render his real meaning imperceptible to his readers, and probably to himself. With how sound a judgment he counselled Mr. Froude to burn his books, may be judged from the following entries in them:—

'I have been talking a great deal to B. about religion to-day. He seems to take such straightforward practical views of it that, when I am talking to him, I wonder what I have been bothering myself with all the summer, and almost doubt how far it is right to allow myself to indulge in speculations on a subject where all that is necessary is so plain and obvious.'—'Yesterday, when I went out shooting, I fancied I did not care whether I hit or not; but when it came to the point, I found myself anxious, and, after having killed, was not unwilling to let myself be considered a better shot than I described myself. I had an impulse, too, to let it be thought that I had only three shots when I really had had four. It was slight, to be sure, but I felt it.'—'I have read my journal, though I can hardly identify myself with the person it describes. It seems like having some one under one's guardianship who was an intolerable fool, and exposed himself to my contempt every moment for the most ridiculous and trifling motives; and while I was thinking all this, I went into L.'s room to seek a pair of shoes, and on hearing him coming got away as silently as possible. Why did I do this? Did I think I was doing what L. did not like? or was it the relic of a sneaking habit? I will ask myself these questions again.'—'I have a sort of vanity which aims at my own good opinion, and I look for any thing to prove to myself that I am more anxious to mind myself than other people. I was very hungry, but because I thought the

charge unreasonable, I tried to shirk the waiter; sneaking!'— 'Yesterday I was much put out by an old fellow chewing tobacco and spitting across me; also bad thoughts of various kinds kept presenting themselves to my mind when it was vacant.'— 'I talked sillily to-day, as I used to do last term, but took no pleasure in it, so I am not ashamed. Although I don't recollect any harm of myself, yet I don't feel that I have made a clean breast of it.'— 'I forgot to mention that I had been looking round my rooms, and thinking that they looked comfortable and nice, and that I said in my heart, Ah, ah! I am warm.'— 'It always suggests itself to me that a wise thought is wasted when it is kept to myself, against which, as it is my most bothering temptation, I will set down some arguments to be called to mind in time of trouble.'— 'Now, I am proud of this, and think that the knowledge it shows of myself implies a greatness of mind.'— 'These records are no guide to me to show the state of my mind afterwards; they are so far from being exercises of humility, that they lessen the shame of what I record, just as professions and good-will to other people reconcile us to our neglect of them.'

The precept 'know thyself' came down from heaven; but such self-knowledge as this has no heavenward tendency. It is no part of the economy of our nature, nor is it the design of our Maker, that we should so cunningly unravel the subtle filaments of which our motives are composed. If a man should subject to such a scrutiny the feelings of others to himself, he would soon lose his faith in human virtue and affection. The mind which should thus put to the question its own workings in the domestic or social relations of life, would ere long become the victim of a still more fatal scepticism. Why dream that this reflex operation which, if directed towards those feelings of which our fellow-creatures are the object, would infallibly eject from the heart all love and all respect for man, should strengthen either the love or the fear of God? A well-tutored conscience aims at breadth rather than minuteness of survey, and tasks itself much more to ascertain general results than to find out the solution of riddles. So long as religious men must reveal their 'experiences,' and self-defamation revels in its present impunity, there is no help for it, but in withholding the applause to which even lowliness itself aspires for the candour with which it is combined, and the acuteness by which it is embellished.

As it is not by these nice self-observers that the creeds of hoar antiquity, and the habits of centuries are to be shaken; so neither is such high emprise reserved for ascetics who can pause to enumerate the slices of bread and butter from which they have abstained. When Whitfield would mortify his body, he set about it



like a man. The paroxysm was short indeed, but terrible. While it lasted his diseased imagination brought soul and body into deadly conflict, the fierce spirit spurning, trampling, and well-nigh destroying the peccant carcase. Not so the fastidious and refined 'witness to the views' of the restorers of the Catholic Church. The strife between his spiritual and animal nature is recorded in his journal in such terms as these,—'Looked with greediness to see if there was goose on the table for dinner.'—'Meant to have kept a fast and did abstain from dinner, but at tea eat buttered toast.'—'Tasted nothing to-day till tea time, and then only one cup and dry bread.'—'I have kept my fast strictly, having taken nothing till near nine this evening, and then only a cup of tea and a little bread without butter, but it has not been as easy as it was last.'—'I made rather a more hearty tea than usual, quite giving up the notion of a fast in W.'s rooms, and by this weakness have occasioned another slip.'

Whatever may be thought of the propriety of disclosing such passages as these, they will provoke a contemptuous smile from no one who knows much of his own heart. But they may relieve the anxiety of the alarmists. Luther and Zuingle, Cranmer and Latimer, may still rest in their honoured graves. 'Take courage, brother Ridley, we shall light up such a flame in England as shall not soon be put out,' is a prophecy which will not be defeated by the successors of the Oxonian divines who listened to it, so long as they shall be vacant to record, and to publish, contrite reminiscences of a desire for roasted goose, and of an undue indulgence in buttered toast.

Yet the will to subvert the doctrines and discipline of the Reformation is not wanting, and is not concealed. Mr. Froude himself, were he still living, might, indeed, object to be judged by his careless and familiar letters. No such objection can, however, be made by the eminent persons who have deliberately given them to the world on account 'of the truth and extreme importance of the views to which the whole is meant to be subservient,' and in which they record their 'own general concurrence.' Of these weighty truths take the following examples:—

'You will be shocked at my avowal that I am every day becoming a less and less loyal son of the Reformation. It appears to me plain that in all matters which seem to us indifferent, or even doubtful, we should conform our practices to those of the Church which has preserved its traditionary practices unbroken. We cannot know about any seemingly indifferent practice of the Church of Rome that it is not a development of the apostolic *ἡθος*, and it is to no purpose to say that we can find no proof of it in the writings

of the first six centuries — they must find a disproof if they would do any thing.'— 'I think people are injudicious who talk against the Roman Catholics for worshipping saints and honouring the Virgin and images, &c. These things may perhaps be idolatrous; I cannot make up my mind about it.'— 'P. called us the Papal Protestant Church, in which he proved a double ignorance, as we are Catholics without the Popery, and Church of England men without the Protestantism.'— 'The more I think over that view of yours about regarding our present communion service, &c. as a judgment on the Church, and taking it as the crumbs from the apostles' table, the more I am struck with its fitness to be dwelt upon as tending to check the intrusion of irreverent thoughts, without in any way interfering with one's just indignation.'— 'Your trumpety principle about Scripture being the sole rule of faith in fundamentals (I nauseate the word), is but a mutilated edition, without the breadth and axiomatic character, of the original.'— 'Really I hate the Reformation and the Reformers more and more, and have almost made up my mind that the rationalist spirit they set afloat is the *ψευδοπροφήτης* of the Revelations.'— 'Why do you praise Ridley? Do you know sufficient good about him to counter-balance the fact, that he was the associate of Crammer, -Peter Martyr, and Bucer?'— 'I wish you could get to know something of S. and W.' (Southey and Wordsworth), 'and un-Protestantise, un-Miltonise them.'— '*How is it WE are so much in advance of our generation?*'

Spirit of George Whitfield! how would thy voice, rolled from 'the secret place of thunders,' have overwhelmed these puny protests against the truths which it was the one business of thy life to proclaim from the rising to the setting sun! In what does the modern creed of Oxford differ from the ancient faith of Rome? Hurried along by the abhorred current of advancing knowledge and social improvement, they have indeed renounced papal dominion, and denied papal infallibility, and rejected the grosser superstitions which Rome herself at once despises and promotes. But a prostrate submission to human authority — the repose of the wearied or indolent mind on external observances—an escape from the arduous exercise of man's highest faculties in the worship of his Maker—and the usurped dominion of the imaginative over the rational nature,—these are the common characteristics of both systems.

The Reformation restored to the Christian world its only authentic canon, and its one Supreme Head. It proclaimed the Scriptures as the rule of life; and the Divine Redeemer as the supreme and central object to whom every eye must turn, and on

whom every hope must rest. It cast down not only the idols erected for the adoration of the vulgar, but the idolatrous abstractions to which the worship of more cultivated minds was rendered. Penetrating the design, and seizing the spirit of the gospels, the reformers inculcated the faith in which the sentient and the spiritual in man's compound nature had each its appropriate office; the one directed to the Redeemer in his palpable form, the other to the Divine Paraclete in his hidden agency; while, united with these, they exhibited to a sinful, but penitent, race the parental character of the Omnipresent Deity. Such is not the teaching of the restored theology. The most eminent of its professors have thrown open the doors of Mr. Froude's oratory, and have invited all passers-by to notice in his prayers and meditations 'the absence of any distinct mention of our Lord and Saviour.' They are exhorted not to doubt that there was a real though silent 'allusion to Christ' under the titles in which the Supreme Being is addressed; and are told that 'this circumstance may be a comfort to those who cannot bring themselves to assume the tone of many popular writers of this day, who yet are discouraged by the peremptoriness with which it is exacted of them. The truth is, that a mind alive to its own real state often shrinks to utter what it most dwells upon; and is too full of awe and fear to do more than silently hope what it most wishes.'

It would indeed be presumptuous to pass a censure, or to hazard an opinion, on the private devotions of any man; but there is no such risk in rejecting the apology which the publishers of those secret exercises have advanced for Mr. Froude's departure from the habits of his fellow Christians. Feeble, indeed, and emasculate must be the system, which, in its delicate distaste for the 'popular writers of the day,' would bury in silence the name in which every tongue and language has been summoned to worship and to rejoice. Well may 'awe and fear' become all who assume and all who invoke it. But an 'awe' which 'shrinks to utter' the name of Him who was born at Bethlehem, and yet does not fear to use the name which is ineffable;—a 'fear' which can make mention of the Father, but may not speak of the Brother, of all,—is a feeling which fairly baffles comprehension. There is a much more simple, though a less imposing theory. Mr. Froude permitted himself, and was encouraged by his correspondents, to indulge in the language of antipathy and scorn towards a large body of his fellow Christians. It tinges his letters, his journals, and is not without its influence even on his devotions. Those despised men too often celebrated the events of their Redeemer's life, and the benefits of his passion, in language of offensive familiarity, and invoked Him

with fond and feeble epithets. Therefore, a good Oxford-Catholic must envelope in mystic terms all allusion to Him round whom as its centre the whole Christian system revolves. The line of demarcation between themselves and these coarse sentimentalists must be broad and deep, even though it should exclude those by whom it is drawn, from all the peculiar and distinctive ground on which the standard of the reformed Churches has been erected. There is really nothing to dread from such hostility and from such enemies. A fine lady visits the United States, and, in loathing against the salivated and tobaccoised republic, becomes an Absolutist. A 'double-first class' theologian overhears the Evangelical psalmody, and straightway turns Catholic. But Congress will not dissolve at the bidding of the fair Exclusive; nor will Exeter Hall be closed to propitiate the fastidious Double-first. The martyrs of disgust and the heroes of revolutions are composed of entirely opposite materials, and are cast in quite different moulds. Nothing truly great or formidable was ever yet accomplished, in thought or action, by men whose love for truth was not strong enough to triumph over their dislike of the offensive objects with which truth may chance to be associated.

Mr. Froude was the helpless victim of such associations. Nothing escapes his abhorrence which has been regarded with favour by his political or religious antagonists. The bill for the Abolition of Slavery was recommended to Parliament by an Administration more than suspected of Liberalism in matters ecclesiastical. The 'Witness to Catholic Views,' 'in whose sentiments as a whole,' his editors concur, visits the West Indies, and they are not afraid to publish the following report of his feelings: — 'I have felt it a kind of duty to maintain in my mind an habitual hostility to the niggers, and to chuckle over the failures of the new system, as if these poor wretches concentrated in themselves all the Whiggery, dissent, cant, and abomination that have been ranged on their side.' Lest this should pass for a pleasant extravagance, the editors enjoin the reader not to 'confound the author's view of the negro cause and of the *abstract negro* with his feelings towards any he should actually meet;' and Professor Thöluck is summoned from Germany to explain how the 'originators of error' may lawfully be the objects of a good man's hate, and how it may innocently overflow upon all their clients, kindred, and connections. Mr. Froude's feelings towards the 'abstract negro' would have satisfied the learned Professor in his most malevolent mood. 'I am ashamed,' he says, 'I cannot get over my prejudices against the niggers.' — 'Every one I meet seems to me like an incarnation of the whole Anti-Slavery Society, and Fowell Buxton at their head.' — 'The thing that



strikes me as most remarkable in the cut of these niggers is excessive immodesty, a forward stupid familiarity intended for civility, which prejudices me against them worse even than Buxton's cant did. It is getting to be the fashion with everybody, even the planters, to praise the emancipation and Mr. Stanley.'

Mr. Froude, or rather his editors, appear to have fallen into the error of supposing that their profession gives them not merely the right to admonish, but the privilege to scold. Lord Stanley and Mr. Buxton have, however, the consolation of being railed at in good company. Hampden is 'hated' with much zeal, though, it is admitted, with imperfect knowledge. Louis Philippe, and his associates of the Three Days, receive the following humane benediction — 'I sincerely hope the march of mind in France *may yet prove a bloody one.*' — 'The election of the wretched B. for —, and that base fellow H. for —, in spite of the exposure,' &c. Again, the editors protest against our supposing that this is a playful exercise in the art of exaggeration. 'It should be observed,' they say, 'as in other parts of this volume, that the author used these words on principle, not as abuse, but as expressing matters of fact, as a way of bringing before his own mind things as they are.'

Milton, however, is the especial object of Mr. Froude's virtuous abhorrence. He is 'a detestable author.' Mr. Froude rejoices to learn something of the Puritans, because, as he says, 'It gives me a better right to hate Milton, and accounts for many of the things which most disgusted me in his (*not in my sense of the word*) *poetry!*' — 'A lady told me yesterday that you wrote the article of Sacred Poetry, &c. I thought it did not come up to what I thought your standard of aversion to Milton.'

Mr. Froude and his editors must absolutely be delivered over to the secular arm and club of Dr. Philip, under the writ *De Hæretico Castigando*, for their wilful obstinacy in rejecting the infallible sentence of the fathers and ecumenical counsels of the Church poetical on this article of faith. There is no room for mercy. Messrs. Froude and Newman are not of the audience, meet but few, to whom the Immortal addressed himself. They have no place in that little company to which alone it is reserved to estimate the powers of such a mind, and reverently to notice its defects. They belong to that multitude who have to make their choice between repeating the established poetical creed, and holding their peace. Why are freethinkers in literature to be endured more than in religion? The guilt of Liberalism has clearly been contracted by this rash judgment; and Professor Thöluck being the witness, it exposes the criminals and the whole society of Oriel, nay,

the entire University itself, to the '*diffusive indignation*' of all who cling to the Catholic faith in poetry.

There are much better things in Mr. Froude's book than the preceding quotations might appear to promise. If given as specimens of his powers, they would do injustice to one whom we willingly would believe to have been a good and able man, a ripe scholar, and a devout Christian; though as illustrations of the temper and opinions of those who now sit in Wicliffe's seat, they are neither unfair nor unimportant. But they may convince all whom it concerns, that hitherto at least Oxford has not given birth to a new race of giants, by whom the Evangelical founders and missionaries of the Church of England are about to be expelled from their ancient authority, or the Protestant world excluded from the light of day and the free breath of heaven.

It was but a heartless folly of the surviving friends of Richard Hurrell Froude, which thus exhibited him as the foremost in the reaction against the 'Evangelical' system. To mark the progress of that reaction, his brother (who announces himself as J. A. Froude, of Exeter College, Oxford) has published a novel called the '*Nemesis of Faith*.' The passage from the flippant shallowness of the posthumous essayist to the puny scepticism of the living novelist, has consumed about ten years, although, from first to last, the direction of it has been unaltered. Mr. Richard Hurrell Froude had, however, the merit of using his mother-tongue with propriety and ease. It is the taste of Mr. J. A. Froude to involve his meaning in a style which strives in vain to be Germanic, and to adorn it with those meretricious embellishments which he has successfully borrowed from the modern Parisian romance. This tractarian of the '*latest development*' is the biographer of an imaginary pupil of Mr. Newman, on whom he bestows the name of '*Markham Sutherland*.' Markham writes several letters to a friend who is made known to us by the name of '*Arthur*,' and Arthur attaches to his friend's letters a series of commentaries. But Markham and Arthur are but two names for one person. They have every sentiment and every opinion in common; if, indeed, their unmanly pulings deserve the name of sentiment, or their chloroform dreams can aspire to the dignity of opinions.

The mouldering walls of an old abbey deliver a discourse to Markham about '*Paganism*,' '*Star Gods*,' and '*Almighty Pan*.' After secretly avowing to his friend his infidelity, he obtains ordination and a benefice. Certain '*Evangelical*' and much abused ladies and gentlemen at a tea-table, wring from him the avowal of his unbelief. He loses his benefice, and migrates to the Lake of Como; where he plays extensively on the flute, writes several irre-

ligious papers, seduces a young married lady, and ends his days in a monastery. Rousseau himself would have shrunk from making his Savoyard vicar the hero of his *Eloise*. Mr. Froude, without any such embarrassment, prepares his readers for an adulterous catastrophe, by a series of audacious speculations from a clergyman on matters religious and ecclesiastical.

To quote almost any page of this book, would be to stain our own pages, although it would be easy to enliven them by various exhibitions of the writer's estimate of himself and of other men. For example, Mr. Froude's hero having, for the first time, performed divine service as a minister of the Church of England, relieves himself by the following missive to his correspondent: — 'I felt so sick, Arthur. So; I may live to be like Burnet, or Tillotson, or Bishop Newton, or Archdeacon Paley. *May I die sooner!*' There would seem a very reasonable probability that this ardent aspiration will not have been breathed by Mr. J. A. Froude in vain. But the ludicrous too rapidly makes way for emotions of a far different kind. The following are no unfair specimens of the general style of this child and pupil of Oxford Catholicism: —

'Considering all the heresies, the enormous crimes, the wickednesses, the astounding follies which the Bible has been made to justify, and which its indiscriminate reading has suggested; considering that it has been indeed the sword which our Lord said that He was sending; that *not the Devil himself could have invented an implement more potent to fill the hated world with lies, and blood, and fury*; I think certainly that to send hawkers over the world, loaded with copies of this book, scattering it in all places, among all persons — not teaching them to understand it — not standing, like Moses, between that heavenly light and them, but cramming it into their own hands as God's book, which He wrote, and they are to read, each for himself, and learn what they can for themselves — *is the most culpable folly of which it is possible for man to be guilty.*'

'In Christianity, as in everything else *which men have thrown out* of themselves, there is the strangest mixture of what is most noble with what is most . . . I shrink from the only word.'

'Sin, therefore, as commonly understood, is a chimera.'

'Our failures are errors, not crimes; — Nature's discipline with which God teaches us, and as little violations of His law, or rendering us guilty in His eyes, as the artist's early blunders, or even ultimate and entire failures, are laying store of guilt on him.'

'When, when shall we learn that "minds" are governed by laws as inexorable as physical laws, and that a man can as easily refuse

to obey what has power over him, as a steel atom can resist the magnet?'

'And why all this murdering? Sometimes for sins committed five centuries past, while for those five centuries generation was let to go on to follow generation in a darkness out of which no deliverance was offered them; for Israel monopolised God. It is nothing to say these were peculiar exceptive cases. The nation to whom they were given never thought them peculiar cases. And what is Revelation, if it is but a catalogue of examples, not what we are, but what we are not, to follow? No, *Arthur, this is not God — this is a Fiend!*'

From the shelter of his convent Mr. Newman, the former teacher of Mr. J. A. Froude, has also sent forth a novel—a novel of humour, drollery, and sarcasm, directed chiefly against those who, ten years since, were his own zealous and affectionate disciples. The scourge of his contempt is laid with inexorable severity on all who have been weak enough to be dazzled and misled by the glare of his sophistry. In a book, which Mr. Newman once regarded as the rule of his faith, there is an awful woe denounced on those by whom offences shall come. In reading the work of his brother novelist with that denunciation in his remembrance, Mr. Newman may perhaps have been awakened to some other and less exulting feeling than that of contempt for his dupes. He has consigned one of them, Richard Hurrell Froude, to lasting ridicule. He has drawn another of them, Mr. J. A. Froude, into the awful responsibility of conceiving in his heart, and publishing with full deliberation, the 'Nemesis of Faith.' Little as is our sympathy with the author of that revolting novel, we have still less fellow-feeling for Mr. Newman, in his new character of Mephistopheles, mocking so merrily at the delusions he has himself propagated, and heedless (as it seems) of their fatal consequences. He is at least entitled to the praise of fairly preparing for the fate which awaits them, any who shall be simple enough to give heed to his present reasonings, to yield to his present persuasions, or to follow his present example.\*

\* In this edition of this book I retain the preceding paragraph, not because I adhere to it, but because I could not otherwise explain in what sense and to what extent I now retract it. It was on the 18th of July 1853, that I for the first time learnt (and the evidence which then reached me was altogether conclusive and irresistible to show), that I had been mistaken in representing Mr. Newman as having aimed the ridicule and the sarcasms of his novel against those who had formerly been his own disciples, and whose imputed errors were the result of his own teaching; and that those caustic passages had really been designed to chastise the follies of a different class of persons. This discovery imposes on me the obligation of thus publicly and unequivocally apologising to



Let us, however, render to the discarded followers of Mr Newman the justice which he himself refuses them.

Although the reaction at Oxford seems chiefly to have originated in a certain morbid fastidiousness of taste, yet there was some apology for the indulgence of that feeling; for while the 'Evangelical' teaching had grievously degenerated from the standard of Newton and Scott, of Milner and of Venn, all the more eminent opponents of it who had risen up at that university, were men of letters, and some of them men of large capacity; and they may be forgiven, if they cannot be approved, for the contemptuous spirit in which they contrasted their own intellectual stature with the dwarfish, sterile, rotatory minds of so many of their more conspicuous antagonists. Although this innovation was, in some, but the relapse into the spiritual bondage from which the Reformers

Mr. Newman for having done him that injustice, and for the asperity of the terms in which, under my misconception of his meaning, I referred to him. I cannot, however, reproach myself with any other fault on this subject than that of dulness. Wits so nimble as his are always in danger of being misunderstood by slower and more torpid minds; and to myself at least the mistake into which I fell was inevitable. It was a very serious but a natural blunder. I had wholly misconceived the light in which Mr. Newman, and the other clerical seceders from the Church of England to the Church of Rome, must regard themselves. I had anticipated that men who had grown grey in the assiduous inculcation of doctrines which, according to their new or adopted creed, were nothing less than deadly poison to the souls of their hearers, would have announced that awful discovery in the spirit of the most profound self-abasement—would have asked pardon of God and man for the terrible and irreparable evil of which they now believed themselves to have been the deliberate and persevering authors—would have been filled with a modest, if not an oppressive, consciousness of the weakness and fallibility of their own judgment, and of their extreme liability to error—and would have abounded in compassionate tenderness for those religious prejudices in which they had themselves been so recently immersed.—But when, to my surprise, I found them a body of self-satisfied, self-confident, and contumelious polemics, I read their *faciæ*, as well as some of their graver passages, in what I must now conclude to have been a 'non-natural' and injurious sense. Under the bias of some such mistake I have in this book referred to Mr. Newman in one or two other places in terms which I should not now select, but which it is not now worth while to alter. He is not a man whose literary or personal reputation will be assailed by any one who is discreetly jealous of his own. While utterly dissenting from the doctrines which he has recently adopted, I render a willing homage to his genius and his learning, to his mastery of all the resources of our English tongue, to the integrity with which, for conscience sake, he has abandoned so many brilliant prospects and long-cherished attachments, and to the spirit with which he stands erect and fearless in the presence of antipathies and of calumnies before which many a brave man might have quailed. My solicitude not to be numbered among his enemies and calumniators is dictated by my regard, not for him, but for myself; for I am well aware that neither his estimation in the world nor his tranquillity of mind is at all dependent on anything which I have ever written or could ever write respecting him.

had rescued us, yet, in many more, it was a sincere and resolute effort to throw round our Protestant liberties the safeguards of law and order, of reverence, and of hoar antiquity. Although the movement brought into action not a few, who, like Mr. Richard Hurrell Froude, could never advance beyond the impertinent minutiae and the ecclesiastical fopperies which became the badges of their fraternity, yet it called forth a still greater number destined to break up much fallow or neglected ground in the Gospel field, and thence to raise harvests of thought which had never before been gathered in their own generation. And though many of the husbandmen in that field laboured to exalt, beyond all reasonable limits, the authority of ecclesiastical traditions, yet even that attempt may perhaps have been more dangerous in appearance than in reality.

For, in the great cycle of religious controversy, the questions at issue remain very much the same from one age to another, though the terms in which they are stated and discussed are continually shifting. Thus, from the remotest historical era of the Jewish and Christian Churches, the strife between the 'Biblical' and the 'Traditional' parties has been unaltered in substance, though carried on under many different forms of speech. To each of the contending hosts an impartial arbitrament must award a certain measure of truth and justice, and of consequent success. The Biblicists have always maintained that, in every passage of Holy Writ, we are listening to words in which the Deity himself has condescended to afford to us solutions at once complete and unambiguous, of all the problems in which, as responsible moral agents, we have any concern. The Traditionists have, with similar constancy, alleged that since the creation of our race, those sacred truths by which we are bound to mould our ideas, and to regulate our conduct, have been transmitted from one depository of them (patriarchal or sacerdotal) to another; that, in the Bible, those truths are neither systematically arranged nor logically established, nor even categorically propounded; that they are announced by the inspired writers in language usually so popular and poetical, often so mythic and abrupt, as must unavoidably have induced endless diversities and invincible errors, if there had not been, in the mind of every reader, a preconceived scheme of hereditary doctrine, into the complex harmony of which all scriptural revelations might be first received, and then be adjusted and reconciled. They who adhere, with severe consistency, to the last of these opinions, generally take refuge in the Roman Catholic fold, as the one secure place of shelter from fatal error. They who pursue to its consequences the former of these opinions, for

the most part find themselves, at length, astray on the bleak mountains of scepticism, without a track, a resting-place, or a guide.

Neither of these disputants is, however, in point of fact, thus inflexibly self-consistent. Loudly as our 'Tractarians' extol the authority of ecclesiastical tradition, they are not really unconscious into what an abyss they would be conducted by following that guidance alone without an habitual appeal, and a constant reference, to the divine law and to the written testimony. Confidently as our 'evangelical biblicists' proclaim that the 'Bible and the Bible only' is their religion, they still read it inevitably, though often unconsciously, by the light of those very traditions which their theory repudiates.

In the New Atlantis, as we learn from the great circumnavigator who discovered and described it, Christianity was established by the unassisted teaching of a volume in which were written 'all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments.' It had been placed by St. Bartholomew 'on a great cylindrical pillar of light' on the sea-shore of the island, whence it was devoutly brought for the instruction of the islanders, 'by one of the wise men of the society of Solomon's house.' Francis Bacon, the witness of 'this miraculous evangelism' of the Apostle, has, with characteristic wisdom, abstained from alleging the yet greater miracle, that the Atlantean people had succeeded in extracting from those inestimable leaves any one of the three creeds of the Catholic Church, or any other dogmatic synopsis of the Christian faith. His narrative, on the contrary, implies that, in their theological isolation, neither doctors nor dogmas flourished amongst them;—that cut off, as they were, from all intercourse with the Fathers, the Schoolmen, and the Reformers, they had found their solitary written guide inexorably silent on many of the most arduous of the questions which most deeply affect the actual condition and the prospects of our race;—that it had never even occurred to them to assign to divinity a place among the sciences;—that they were destitute of all tenets whatever on many of the subjects most insisted on among other Christians, such as original sin, baptismal regeneration, the efficacy of the sacraments, and the like;—and that, although devout and learned above all other people, these mere biblicists of the New Atlantis had never discovered in their language, nor attempted to invent, any terms in which to define either the mysteries of the divine nature, or those of the human nature of the divine Redeemer, or those of His real presence in the consecrated elements. Such, indeed, seems to have been, and such is probably still, the primitive simplicity of these 'Bible Christians,' that if they shall

hereafter be visited by the most 'evangelical' of our missionaries, the 'wise men of the society of Solomon's house,' though they have by heart the volume deposited on the pillar of light, will infallibly astound their visitors by the assurance that they have never perceived in it, nor conjectured that it could contain, either the system of theology which their new teachers will lay before them, or any other theological system whatever.

If a lawyer, educated in this nineteenth century, should say that he had gathered the whole scheme of the British Constitution from the statutes at large, he would be quite as reasonable as a contemporary divine, who should persuade himself that he had deduced his creeds and systematic views of Christian doctrine from the Bible, and the Bible alone. The Doctor, whether he has graduated in law or in divinity, has grown up from the cradle in the arms of traditions, and in the lap of prepossessions, which have indelibly impressed their own character on all the knowledge which he has afterwards derived from his books. We have some myriads of clergymen amongst us, who have subscribed their assent to each of the three confessions of faith which are comprised in the Anglican Liturgy. Will any one of those reverend persons seriously assert that, without the aid of uninspired teaching, he either did discover in the sacred text, or could have discovered there, the whole of any one of those confessions? or that, if confined to the study of that text alone, he would have detected a fatal error in the opinion of the 'Similarity of Substance?'—a vital truth in the opinion of the 'Identity of Substance;' or that he would have learnt that between the inversion of the words 'Begotten not made,' and the retaining those words in their present order, there lay all the difference of a deadly heresy and an orthodox belief?

Unwelcome as such a conclusion must be to any controversialists, it seems inevitable to conclude that the Traditional party is far more biblical, and the Biblical party very far more traditional, than either of them are willing to suppose, whether of their opponents, or of themselves. Except by those who rush either into the extreme of spiritual bondage, or into the excesses of spiritual anarchy, these conflicting opinions are held on both sides, with such great, though unavowed qualifications, as render them far more innoxious, in fact, than might be anticipated, from the incautious language of the disputants. To be thus unconsciously at variance with oneself, is a mental weakness, which, in a greater or less degree, is only not universal. Many a man prostrates himself before the shrine of the Virgin, in whose heart the spirit of the Bible neutralises the superstition which it has not subdued. Many a man worships in all the naked simplicity of Geneva, in whose mind the traditions of the



Church control the lawless licence with which he boasts, and believes, that he interprets the Scriptures for himself.

Yet since, for the hearts of most of us, slavery has more attractions than freedom—since it leads to far more fatal evils—and since it much more effectually debars us from the highest good—so is there far greater cause to deprecate the dangers of the traditional, than those of the biblical, system of belief. For all traditional knowledge is deeply imbued with the infirmities and the corruptions of the human agency through which it reaches us. It ever tends to crystallise into brilliant, but cold, hard, and profitless theories. But biblical knowledge, like the manna rained on the wilderness, ever tends to dissolve into a warm, and generous, and healthful nutriment. From ecclesiastical lore we learn how to be subtle in distinctions, exact in the analysis of particular doctrines, and clear-sighted in the synthesis of them all. But from the Bible, and from the Bible alone, we may derive, though with no scientific accuracy, and by no logical process, the one great, prolific, and all-embracing idea—even the idea of Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being. There also, and there only, we learn all that is to be known, or rather all that is to be felt and experienced, of our relations to Him—how they have been impaired by sin, and how they have been restored by an adorable, though utterly inscrutable, atonement. There also we discover what are the spiritual agencies employed for the restoration of our nature to its primeval image. There, too, is lifted the veil which interposes between our present and our future state, so far as to disclose to us that this ‘mortal is to put on immortality.’ There, in no recondite learning, no abstruse speculation, nor in any abstract creed, but in the very person of Christ himself, is exhibited to us the Way, the Truth, and the Life. There we may contemplate and listen to Him, who is the ‘Word,’ or communicative energy, of God. There is set before us the very image of Deity, so far as it can be projected on the dark and contracted mirror of our feeble humanity. There we become cognisant of a spiritual relationship—a consanguinity of the soul of man with Him who assumed man’s nature—an alliance which, though human words can but ill express it, the gospels reveal to us as not less real, and as far more intimate and enduring, than those which bind us to each other in domestic life.

These, and such as these, are the disclosures which day by day dawn with still increasing brightness on him who continually refers to the revealed Word of God for light, and day by day examines by that light every theological opinion which he has gathered from any other source. It is because the fathers of the ‘Evangelical succession’ thus continually resorted to Holy Scripture as at once

the ultimate source and the one criterion of all religious truth, that we reverently hail them as the restorers and witnesses of the faith in their own and in succeeding generations. It is in proportion as they who now sit in their seats are in this respect imitating their example, that we assign to them also their measure of the same honour. But we do not judge that the like homage may not be reasonably rendered to many, who, taking their departure from what is evidently a distant, and apparently an opposite point, are yet conducted, even by their reverence for ecclesiastical traditions, to the feet of the same great Teacher, and who study His recorded life and language with the same childlike affiance and unreserved docility. In the presence of their common enemies, Sin and Ignorance, Superstition and Idolatry, our teachers would, we think, do wisely to abate much of their mutual alienation and distrust. Their disciples can, we trust, not be doing ill, or interposing presumptuously, by any attempt, however humble, to promote such reconciliation.

## WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

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BIOGRAPHY must be parsimonious of her honours; yet, even in the age of Burke and Mirabeau, of Napoleon and Wellington, of Goethe and of Walter Scott, she could not have justly refused them to one who, by paths till then untrodden, reached a social and political eminence never before attained by any man unaided by place, by party, or by the sword.

William Wilberforce was born at Hull, on the 24th of August, 1759. His father, a merchant of that town, traced his descent from a family which had for many generations possessed a large estate at Wilberfoss, in the East Riding of the county of York. From that place was derived the name which the taste or the caprice of his latter progenitors moulded into the form in which it was borne by their celebrated descendant. His mother was nearly allied to many persons of consideration, among whom may be numbered the present Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Winchester, and the members of that great London banking house of which Lord Carrington was formerly the head.

In the commencement of the reign of George III., the Grammar School of Hull was kept by Joseph Milner, the Church historian, assisted by his brother Isaac, who afterwards rose to great academical honours and emoluments in the University of Cambridge. To attend their lectures, William Wilberforce, then a sickly and diminutive child, might be daily seen passing along the streets of his native town with his satchel on his shoulder. Even at that early age he was himself appointed to teach. So rich were the tones of his voice, and such the grace and impressiveness with which it was modulated, that the Milners would lift him on the table, that his schoolfellows might admire and imitate such a model in the art of recitation. At a far distant period the same matchless voice was to be employed in courts and parliaments, in defence of the theological system, among the confessors and advocates of which each of his tutors was destined to hold a distinguished station.

The father of William Wilberforce died before his son had completed his tenth year, and the ample patrimony which he then inherited was afterwards largely increased on the death of a paternal uncle, to whose guardianship his childhood was committed. By that kinsman he was placed at a school in the immediate neighbourhood of his own residence, at Wimbledon in Surrey. The following are the characteristic terms in which, many years afterwards, the pupil recorded his recollections of this second stage of his literary education. 'Mr. Chalmers the master, himself a Scotchman, had an usher of the same nation, whose red beard, for he scarcely shaved once a month, I shall never forget. They taught French, arithmetic, and Latin. With Greek we did not much meddle. It was frequented chiefly by the sons of merchants, and they taught, therefore, everything and nothing. Here I continued some time as a parlour boarder. I was sent at first among the lodgers, and I can remember even now the nauseous food with which we were supplied, and which I could not eat without sickness.'

His early years were not, however, to pass away without some impressions more important and not less abiding than those which had been left on his sensitive nerves by the red beard of one of his Scotch teachers, and by the ill savour of the dinners of the other. His uncle's wife was a disciple of George Whitfield, and, under her pious care, he acquired a familiarity with the sacred writings, and a habit of devotion, the results of which were perceptible throughout the whole of his more mature life. While yet a school-boy, he had written several religious letters, 'much in accordance with the opinions which he subsequently adopted,' and which, but for his peremptory interdict, the zeal of some indiscreet friend would have given to the world. On looking back, after a long interval, to this part of his youthful training, Mr. Wilberforce summed up, in the following pithy sentence, his estimate of its apparent tendency: 'If I had staid with my uncle I should probably have been a bigoted, despised Methodist.' His mother's earlier sagacity foresaw what her son's later experience discovered, and by her he was withdrawn from Wimbledon, and initiated into the amusements and luxuries of his native city.

The escape from methodism, bigotry, and contempt, was complete. The youth sang, danced, and feasted with the wealthier inhabitants of Hull, endured their card parties, and admired their strolling players; and, lest these spells should be too weak to cast out the Whitfield spirit from his mind, he was committed by the same maternal prescience to the care of a professional exorcist of such demons. He was a sound and well-beneficed divine, a



polished gentleman, an elegant scholar, and master of the endowed grammar school of Pocklington. To him his pupil was indebted for some general knowledge of polite literature, and for an intimate acquaintance with the best dinner tables in that part of the county of York. From this easy thrall he passed, at the age of seventeen, to St. John's College, Cambridge, not without a tincture of learning more than sufficient for the plausibilities of the literary character which he was there to sustain.

No better choice could have been made, if the object of his residence at the University had been to repress any aspirations towards scholarship of a higher order. His companions were hard-drinking, licentious youths, whose talk was even worse than their lives. His teachers did their best to make and to keep him idle. The single problem proposed for his solution was, 'Why so rich a man should trouble himself with fagging?' and no Johnian Archimedes could find the answer. Euclid and Newton were abandoned for whist, and Thucydides for such other pastimes as collegiate dulness loves best. With a great Yorkshire pie crowning his table, and with wit, drollery, and song ever flowing from his lips, the child of fortune passed through his academical course, the centre of that never-failing crowd, whose aim it is to eat without cost, and to be amused without effort.

'That complete and generous education which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war,' was not to be acquired under such teachers or among such associates. Yet scarcely had Mr. Wilberforce shaken off that alliance, than he entered on one of the noblest and most difficult of those offices. Within six weeks from the sumptuous celebration of the day on which he attained his majority, he found himself, by the expenditure among the electors of Hull of more than 8000*l.*, their representative in the House of Commons.

To make laws is the single employment of adult life which is supposed to require no preparatory study; which may be one of the reasons why the studies of half a life are too little for the right interpretation of such laws as our legislators make. The young member for Hull, conscious as he was of his ignorance, may yet have sustained himself with the conviction that he would meet in Parliament with many as ill provided as he was with political science, and scarcely with any one so well qualified by the mere instinct of natural sagacity to discuss any question, however unfamiliar, or to adorn it by the embellishments of an insinuating address, a playful fancy, a brave self-reliance, and a voice which resembled an Eolian harp controlled by the touch of a St. Cecilia.

He had, indeed, come up to London (such was his rustic simplicity) 'stored with arguments to prove the authenticity of Rowley's poems,' unconscious that, among the gay circle awaiting him, the sermons delivered in the pulpit of St. Mary Redcliffe would have been just as welcome as a debate on the parchments discovered in her tower. Brookes's, White's, and Boodle's received him with open arms. George Selwyn stood sentinel at the far-table to keep away any intrusive good advice. With Fox, Fitzpatrick, and Sheridan he chatted, or played at cards or dice, according to the humour of the moment. His suppers were taken at a club of which William Pitt, Lord Grenville, and Windham were assiduous members. At a Shaksperian party at the Boar's Head he admired the surpassing brilliancy of Pitt, 'the wittiest man' (such is his record of that evening) 'he ever knew; to whose mind every possible combination of ideas seemed always present, and who could at once produce whatever he desired.' At Wimbledon the ghost of his pious aunt might have awakened from the tomb to see Lord Harrowby, her nephew's guest, alight, not long before sunrise, at the gates which once were hers, wearing the triangular hat which had clung by him at the Opera, and, not long after the sun had risen, William Pitt, another of his guests, industriously sowing her once-loved flower-beds with the fragments of it, in order, as he declared, to raise a crop of new ones. At Burlington House Mrs. Sheridan sang to him 'old English songs angelically.' At Devonshire House he was himself required to sing by no mean judge in such matters, George, the too famous Prince of Wales. One while passing an evening with Mrs. Siddons, at another exchanging repartees with the 'charming Mrs. Crewe,' and occasionally speaking with applause in St. Stephen's Chapel (in those days the best and most fashionable of debating societies), he floated with the gay crowd down the smooth current of early life, until the resignation of the Shelburne ministry restored Mr. Pitt to leisure, and enabled the two friends, accompanied by Mr. Eliot (dear alike to both of them), to project and execute a summer tour in France.

This 'march of the allies to Paris' was directed through the ancient city of Rheims. As the school in which the future minister of England and his friends were to study the French language, no place could have been more judiciously chosen; for, as M. Guizot teaches us, it is the sacred fountain from whence have flowed all the streams of our modern civilisation. Yet in the year 1783 Rheims failed to impart to her English visitors the knowledge which they had proposed to gather there. 'We spent nine or ten days without making any great progress,' says Mr. Wilberforce,

‘which,’ he adds, ‘could not indeed be expected of us, as we spoke to no human being but each other and our Irish courier.’ Ten years later such a secret conclave of foreigners in the metropolis of an English province would have excited the jealousy of Mr. Pitt himself. Little marvel, then, that in the capital of Champagne it attracted the inquisitive eye of M. Du Chatel, the Royal Intendant of Police. Who might these mysterious strangers be? Were they hatching a conspiracy against the great ally of Washington? — England had bitter humiliations to avenge. Or were they in alliance with Count Cagliostro against the purses of his most Christian Majesty’s subjects? — England, impoverished by war, was the too fertile parent of swindlers seeking after their prey. M. Du Chatel must look to it!

There was at Rheims, in those days, an Abbé de Legeard, ‘a fellow of infinite humour,’ to whom the Intendant disclosed his suspicions. The Abbé undertook a domiciliary visit to the intriguants. He found them as full of humour as himself, liked their appearance, their manners, and their talk, and ended at last by a cordial tender to them of his good services.

The son of Chatham stood then in urgent need of such subsidies as he was destined at a future day to lavish. ‘Here we are,’ he exclaimed to the fascinated Abbé, ‘in the middle of Champagne, and can’t get any tolerable wine!’ The Abbé was moved. In his own cellars was some of the choicest, and it crowned his hospitable board, during five or six successive hours, for the exhilaration of his English guests — a symposium doubtless of infinite hilarity, fearful as may have been its length, to the courteous Frenchman.

Rheims began to assume a brighter aspect. Either the future agitator of Europe, or the future liberator of Africa (history does not say which), had been the bearer of an introduction to M. Coustier, of that city, from the great Peter Thellusson, and to the hotel of M. Coustier, their coachman was directed to drive. ‘It was with some surprise that we found him’ (such is Mr. Wilberforce’s contemporary narrative) ‘behind a counter distributing raisins. I had heard that it was very usual for gentlemen on the Continent to practise some handicraft trade or other for their amusement, and therefore, for my own part, I concluded that his taste was in the fig way, and that he was only playing at grocer for his amusement; and, viewing the matter in this light, I could not help admiring the excellence of his imitation.’ A genuine grocer, however, was M. Coustier. But he was *un brave homme* to boot, and at the request of milords Anglais mounted his wig and sword, and ushered them to the house of one of his best customers among the noblesse. This was no other than M. Du Chatel

himself. 'Relations of peace and amity' were established between the Intendant and the suspects. He introduced them to the Archbishop, and the Archbishop gave them 'two very good and pleasant dinners,' with an invitation to spend a week at his palace. The following is the portrait which Mr. Wilberforce has bequeathed to posterity of this agreeable prelate. 'Archbishops in England are not like archbishops in France. These last are jolly fellows, of about forty years of age, who play at billiards, and live like other people.'

In October, Paris opened her gates to the three members of the British Parliament. Mr. Wilberforce's memorabilia of their sojourn there resemble the brief notes so often found in the hands of 'honourable gentlemen' when rising to take part in a debate. From these fragments, however, we collect that they associated with Vergennes, La Fayette, and Marmontel—that they followed the court to Fontainebleau—that there Mr. Pitt hunted the stag on horseback, while his companions in a chaise hunted the boar—that Louis XVI. on that occasion presented himself 'in immense boots, a clumsy strange figure, of the hog kind'—that at Madame de Polignac's 'poor Marie Antoinette chatted easily,' and rallied them with inquiries after their friend M. Coustier, the *épicier*—that they passed an evening with Benjamin Franklin—that 'all the men and women crowded round Pitt in shoals, who behaved with great spirit, though he was sometimes a little bored when they talked to him about 'the Parliamentary Reform'—and that he was at length rescued from the crowd of his admirers by Iris, who, in the shape of a king's messenger, suddenly appeared at Paris, charged with despatches from the Jupiter Londinensis.

The object of this royal summons was to secure the aid of Mr. Pitt in opposing the India Bill, and in turning out the authors of it. He obeyed; and in the struggle in which he was soon afterwards engaged with the majority of the House of Commons, he found no more zealous or effective supporter than the partaker of his amusements at Paris and at Rheims.

The Coalition Ministry was now the one object of popular invective; and, at a public meeting in the Castle Yard at York, in March, 1784, Mr. Wilberforce, in a speech, welcomed with the loudest plaudits, contributed his share of invective against the Unholy Alliance. In an account of the scene which he transmitted to Mr. Dundas, James Boswell described it in terms equally characteristic of the speaker and of himself. 'I saw,' he says, 'what seemed a mere shrimp mount upon the table; but, as I listened, he grew and grew until the shrimp became a whale.'

A still more convincing attestation of his eloquence on this



occasion is to be found in the consequences to which it led. Mr. Wilberforce had attended this meeting with the avowed purpose of defeating the influence of the great Whig families of Yorkshire at the approaching general election, and with the unavowed purpose of becoming himself a candidate for the county. From 'Wilberforce and Liberty,' the cry raised by his auditors while he spoke, the transition was obvious and easy to the cry of 'Wilberforce for Yorkshire' when he concluded. The current of popular favour flowed strongly in his support, for he appeared as the tribune of the people against the patricians of the North; he had opposed the India Bill; he had denounced the Coalition; and he enjoyed the personal affection of Mr. Pitt, then rich in hereditary honours, in personal renown, and in the brightest promise. Large subscriptions defrayed the expense of the contest, and his aristocratic opponents, without venturing to the poll, surrendered to him a seat which he continued to occupy without intermission in many successive Parliaments.

With this memorable triumph, Mr. Wilberforce closed his twenty-fifth year. He was now in possession of whatever could exalt the hopes of a candidate for fame on the noblest theatre of civil action which at that period had ever been thrown open to the ambition of private men. But the appointed hour had also struck, from which a new direction was to be given to the thoughts and the pursuits of this favourite of nature and of fortune.

Accompanied by some of his female relatives, and by Isaac Milner, one of his two earliest tutors, the new member for the county of York, before appearing in the House of Commons in that capacity, undertook a journey to the south of France, and thence through Switzerland to Spa. This expedition (interrupted by a brief return to England in the winter of 1784-5) was extended during some months, and forms a memorable era in his life. The lessons he had learnt in childhood at Wimbledon, had left an indelible impression on his mind. The dissipation of his subsequent days had but retarded the growth of those seeds of early piety. The companions of his youth had not been without frequent intimations that their gay associate was silently revolving deeper thoughts than those which formed the staple of their ordinary social intercourse. These were now to take entire possession of his mind, and to become the life and mainsprings of his future existence. The opinions of George Whitfield had found a more impressive expositor than the good lady who had originally inculcated them upon him.

Isaac Milner was a man of strong native sense, and of no inconsiderable learning, and would probably have attained to celebrity,

both in science and in theology, if the too early possession of three rich ecclesiastical and academic sinecures had not enabled him to gratify his constitutional indolence. In a narrow collegiate circle he exercised a colloquial despotism akin to that which Samuel Johnson had enjoyed, and to which Samuel Parr had aspired, among the men of letters and statesmen of their age. But Milner's dogmatism was relieved by a tenderness of heart not inferior to that of the great lexicographer, and was informed by a divinity incomparably more profound than that of the grandiloquent grammarian. He was among the dearest of the friends of Mr. Wilberforce, and now became his spiritual preceptor and guide.

And now our narrative has reached a point at which the ground over which we have to pass becomes tremulous and unstable. If we adopt the orthodox style of the Episcopalian Churches, we must record that 'the baptismal seed, long dormant in the soul of Isaac Milner's pupil, began at length to germinate and to yield its fruit.' If we prefer the language of a more popular theology, it must be stated that 'the conversion of Mr. Wilberforce took place in the twenty-sixth year of his age, and during his journey to Nice.' There are, we doubt not, those to whom each of these forms of speech conveys an intelligible meaning. But there are others who can perceive in them nothing more than abtruse metaphors or rhetorical tropes; and they, in a deep consciousness of their own ignorance, referring all such mysteries both to that revelation of the divine will which is 'written with ink,' and to that other revelation of it which is written 'on the fleshly tables of the heart,' will learn from each of those revelations that the human mind is subject to a sacred influence, which, like the wind, bloweth where it listeth, although it be given to none to discover whence it cometh or whither it goeth.

It is a fact, which few, if any, self-observers will deny, that, in the interior life of every man, there are occurrences explicable on no hypothesis but that of the direct intervention of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for the spiritual improvement of his rational creatures. Such events may be considered either as parts of some great predetermined system, or as immediate interpositions of the Deity in particular cases. Each supposition alike refers to that divine origin those salutary changes in human character which the least thoughtful so often notice, and which even the most depraved not seldom undergo.

Such a change, when enduring and complete, is designated in the familiar theological terminology as 'a new birth;' and if it be allowable to assign a definite sense to a phrase so much darkened by the rhetorical use of it, 'the new birth' may be said to consist

in the progressive coincidence of inclination and of duty, or in the divorce of obedience from self-denial. A slow, a laborious, and an imperfect process indeed with the best of us! Yet, in very many, an evident reality attested by the most conclusive proofs. The very day-dreams on this subject, which are floating in most minds and in most societies, are themselves a sufficient evidence of the existence of substantial things on which they rest as a basis, and which they indistinctly reflect and dimly shadow forth to us.

But when such a phenomenon is alleged by the biographers of any man, they are bound to distinguish, as clearly as may be, between his original and his superinduced character, and to explain, in unambiguous language, in what the new man differed from the old. A hard necessity, if not a desperate attempt! Yet an attempt to be reverently made, if we would not dismiss, unsolved and unexamined, the most curious problem which the life of Mr. Wilberforce raises or suggests.

Man, as he is delineated by the great masters of fiction, is made up of elements which are at once incongruous, inharmonious, conflicting, and yet compatible. Man, as he is drawn by inferior artists, is the impersonation of some one dominant propensity which possesses, guides, and individualises him. Thus Lawrence Sterne has filled up his canvass with four figures, each of whom, like one of Joanna Baillie's heroes, is in bondage to some one tyrannical passion. To Mr. Shandy is assigned the love of wisdom, — to Uncle Toby the wisdom of love, — to Corporal Trim heart-loyalty to his captain, — and to Yorick a versatile sympathy, by which the humours of all the rest are caught, and heightened, and reflected. Shakspeare or Cervantes would have known how to blend the whole group into one complex man — a composite yet not irreconcilable assemblage of dissimilar qualities — a veritable unit of the race of Adam. Such an imaginary personage would have borne a vivid resemblance to the *aboriginal* William Wilberforce.

By force of a decree preceding his birth, he came into the world predestined to be the centre of admiration and of love for the circle of his associates in it. Nature herself endowed him with that genial warmth and graciousness of temper which, by a constant succession of spontaneous impulses, pours itself into all the channels of social intercourse. Towards all who approached him, those kindnesses which, unless when innate are unattainable, expanded with such a happy promptitude, that, to borrow a well-known eulogy, he might have passed for the brother of every man, and for the lover of every woman, with whom he conversed.

This instinct of philanthropy was combined with a mercurial

gaiety, and with that exquisite perception of all the proprieties of life, which, in mesmeric language, places cultivated minds in 'a relation of mutual consciousness towards each other.' Every eye which followed him beamed with the lights, or was darkened by the shadows, which played over his countenance; and his feelings, whether grave or gay, vibrated through every point of the circle by which he was surrounded.

The basis of the natural or indigenous character of Mr. Wilberforce was laid in this quick fellow-feeling with other men. All the restless vivacity of Voltaire, and a sensibility more profound than that of Rousseau, met in him and mutually controlled each other. His responsiveness to the joys and the sorrows of his companions made the happy and the wretched his captives in their turns. But, though ready to weep with those who wept, he was still more prompt to rejoice with those that rejoiced; nor could the elastic rebound of his heart to gladness be ever long repressed by any burthen, whether laid on others or on himself.

Society was not merely his delight or his passion; it was the necessity of his existence. He mixed freely, and on equal terms, with all the men and women of his age the most eminent in wit, in genius, and in learning; and drank in, with the keenest relish, every variety of colloquial eloquence. Yet he not merely endured but rejoiced in companions, whose absence would have been a luxury to any one but himself. When Pitt, and Burke, and Sheridan were not to be had, he would take the most cordial pleasure in the talk of the most woollen of his constituents at Leeds. When Madame de Stael and Mrs. Crewe were away, some dowager from the Cathedral Whist Club became his inspiring muse, and for the moment, would seem herself to be half inspired. Dulness fled at his approach. The most somnolent awakened at his presence. The heaviest countenance caught some animation from his eye. 'The listless prisoner of an easy chair' gave out some sparks of intellect when brought into a friendly collision with him.

Reckless is the liberality which bestows rank, wealth, beauty, and prowess so lavishly on the preux chevalier of romance. He enjoys those exterior advantages at the expense of his essential greatness. But the charm exercised by Mr. Wilberforce was the inherent and indefeasible attribute of the soul herself. Informed by her, the body which, with all affection and reverence be it spoken, was but a caricature of the human form divine, became the ready minister of all his social purposes, and the eloquent interpreter of all his emotions. Before his fellow-men, that diminutive and shapeless figure bore itself gallantly, as if elevated and sustained by conscious worth. Towards the other sex, his attitudes and looks



and bearing expressed a respect and a tenderness so heartfelt and so grateful, as to impart to the humblest woman he addressed a sense of self-complacency; and as to fascinate those who were themselves the most skilful in the arts of fascination. Bayard, accosting a damsel of the House of Longueville, could not have carried himself with a more gentle and generous courtesy.

There is an association of certain indissoluble ideas which degrades the histrionic art in general esteem, yet the faculty of exhibiting and exciting every human sentiment is a power which, though too often desecrated to the meanest ends, may be devoted to the noblest. Mr. Wilberforce was, by the gift of nature, amongst the most consummate actors of his times. Imagine David Garrick—talking not as a mime, but from the resources of his own mind, and the impulses of his own nature—to have personated in some other society the friends with whom he had been dining at the Literary Club,—now uttering maxims of wisdom with Johnsonian dignity—then haranguing with a rapture like that of Burke—telling a good story with the unction of James Boswell—chuckling over a ludicrous jest with the child-like glee of Oliver Goldsmith—singing a ballad with all the taste of Percy—reciting poetry with the classical enthusiasm of Cumberland—and, at each successive change in this interlude, exhibiting the amenities of Sir Joshua—then brood a while over this supposed monopolylogue, and there will emerge an image of the social William Wilberforce, ever the same, and ever multiform, constraining his companions to laugh, to weep, to admire, to exult, and to meditate at his bidding.

This rare felicity in running over the whole scale of feeling, and the refinement which rescued him, at each successive passage, from every taint of affectation or of coarseness, gave to his discourse a far deeper interest than would have belonged to the mere words he uttered, if falling from any lips but his own. A certain air of originality embellished the most trite and familiar of his observations. There was still an impress of novelty when he repeated for the twentieth time some favourite maxim, or told over again some well-known story, or resumed the discussion of yesterday from the very beginning. In 'The Doctor,' Southey has drawn an inverted pyramid, the narrowing lines of which represent the subsiding cadences in which he supposes Mr. Wilberforce to repeat the words, 'Poor creature!' when advised by the anonymous author to read his book on a Sunday; each cadence in its turn being meant to convey a rebuke in which kindness and acidity, liking and dislike, acquiescence and dissent, meet together in continually varying proportions. Now this is hardly a burlesque. The words, however simple, which Mr. Wilberforce selected as the vehicle of any

passion, became, in his use of them, as replete with significance as those homely phrases with which Mrs. Siddons was accustomed to awaken the loudest echoes of the theatre. The expression 'Poor creature !' modulated, and varied, and played with, as he would have managed it, would have formed an exquisite criticism on the favourite work of the Laureate, with all its graceful pathos and unmirthful jocularity.

In the age of Jekyll, Mackintosh, and Sydney Smith, society had no member more popular or more attractive than William Wilberforce. At one time obeying the impulse of the moment, at another pursuing the train of his solitary musing, he passed and repassed from the merest frolic of fancy to the most mature contemplations, the same simple-hearted natural man, talking, without effort, or preparation, or disguise, from the overflowing of his mind, although his voice and manner, and the whole structure of his dialogue, were in a state of constant vicissitude. Yet scarcely any memorial of his table-talk has survived him, nor is it difficult to explain the reason.

Wit may either pervade a man's conversation, or be condensed in particular passages of it, as the electric current may be either equally diffused through the atmosphere, or flash across it. Mr. Wilberforce turned on every topic which he touched a sort of galvanic stream of vivacity, humour, and warm-heartedness, which tended rather to volatilise and to disperse, than to consolidate, the substances on which it fell. He did not dispose of a laughable incident by one terse and pregnant jest ; he rather used it as a toy to be tossed about and played with for a while, and then thrown aside. Even his wisdom demanded a certain breadth of space for its development ; for it incorporated every illustration, pleasant or pathetic, which fell in his way, and left behind it an impression more delightful than definite. Being himself amused and interested by everything, whatever he said became amusing or interesting. Sometimes Francis Bacon would supply the text, and sometimes Sir John Sinclair ; but whether he fused the pure gold of the sage, or brayed, as in a mortar, the crotchets of the simpleton, the comment was irresistibly charming, though no memory could retain the glowing, picturesque, or comic language in which it was delivered. When he and Sydney Smith left the same dinner-table, their companions carried away some of the solid bullion of wit from the Canon of St. Paul's to be exhibited in other company ; but from the member for the county of York, recollections which, though not transferable to others by any quotation of his words, dwelt with themselves as an exhilarating influence, like that of some joyous carol or pungent æther.

If it be required that the eulogies on his colloquial powers should be justified more distinctly than by this kind of general description, the demand will perhaps be best satisfied by referring to his letters. It must indeed be admitted that his epistolary style is far below that of the great writers in that kind, and below his own reputation; that his sport is not very graceful, nor his tenderness very touching, nor his gravity very impressive. But suppose a man continually pouring forth, in his common talk, language as brilliant as that in which he writes to Hannah More, or as playful as that in which he rallies Lord Muncaster, or as full of deep meaning as that in which he unbosoms himself to William Hey, or as affectionate as the style of his letters to his sons; and suppose that his discourse is continually embellished by the most perfect histrionic ornaments; and the supposition will render Mr. Wilberforce audible and visible to the imaginations of those who never heard or saw him, very much as he was to the bodily organs of those who lived with him in familiar intimacy.

His social passion, and his social talents, clung to him even when he quitted the throng of men for the solitude of his library. Although a stranger to all the exact sciences, whether physical or moral, and though neither born nor educated to be himself a great author, he was yet the happy comrade, the docile pupil, and the enthusiastic admirer of the greatest. After having lost the sight of one of his eyes, and while sorely annoyed by the ailments of the other, he ran over with eagerness, and appreciated with curious felicity, a greater body of literature than is usually compassed by those who devote themselves exclusively to letters.

It was, indeed, an ill-assorted and heterogeneous mass, made up of history, morals, philosophy, poetry, statistics, ephemeral politics, and theology; yet it was not without a certain unity of design that these were all in turn either lightly skimmed, or diligently studied. He was never abandoned by his human affections, even when his books were his only companions. He searched them to detect the various springs of human action, and their influence on the welfare of the great brotherhood he loved so well. He learned from them to understand, and so to benefit, mankind. Nor, in his intercourse with these mute teachers, was he deserted by the tricky Ariel, who inspired his carriage and his talk in the haunts of living men. That brilliant fancy broke out into a ceaseless colloquy with the grave masters at whose feet he sat. He would controvert, interrogate, or applaud in the form of marginal notes, when he was alone; or, if an auditor was at hand, in spoken comments, at one moment so arch and humorous, at the next so reverent and affectionate, and then so full of solemn meaning, that the austere folio, or the

saucy pamphlet, became so many characters in a sort of tragic-comedy; in which, however, there was usually a large preponderance of the droll above the serious.

For so arbitrary were the associations of his ideas, such the revelry of his animal life, and so tumultuous the flow of his thoughts, that if his presence had not been fatal to fatigue, the rapid transitions through which the interlocutor in any dialogue with him was hurried, might have perplexed and wearied the most patient listener. In his most playful moods, reverence for all that he esteemed great and holy would arrest at an instant the riot of his spirits; and, when elevated to the highest contemplations, some odd conceit would lighten up his face with unexpected smiles, and break forth in a burst of contagious merriment.

It was difficult or impossible to take a deliberate measure of the intellectual stature of such a companion; nor was it until time and distance had subdued the power of the charm, and diminished the accuracy of the remembrance of it, that they who lived with him could make any successful attempt to estimate and analyse the powers by which they had been dazzled. The result of that tardy effort was to induce the conviction that the master of the spell had not received from on high a commission to disclose hidden truth, or to throw over familiar truth the mantle of a creative imagination — that he never held, nor could ever have attained, to a place among philosophers or poets — and that nature had not formed him for patient inquiry, suspended judgment, or for faith in the glorious unrealities of fiction. But if not permitted to take his stand within the innermost circle of genius, he derived from nature such rapidity of conception — such an intuitive insight into the characters of other men — such a sense of the ludicrous and of the tender — a wit vaulting so lightly across his whole visible horizon — and so ardent a love for every form of beauty, as justified the enthusiasm of his admirers, although his name would scarcely have descended to posterity if he had devoted himself to any other than an active life.

And now, whether it be more fitly called the tardy ripening of baptismal seed, or an early conversion, or by whatever other theological term the event may be most properly described, it came to pass that he was roused and qualified for that course of life, by the great though gradual change to which we have referred. ‘To be born again’ is to acquire, not new powers, but a new tendency of the powers which we derive from nature. William Wilberforce, the pupil of George Selwyn, and William Wilberforce, the pupil of John Newton, were not two different men, but one and the same man. Yet his two preceptors did not differ more widely from each



other than he differed from his former self. Before him had opened a new world, and within him a new creation. From an intoxicating intercourse with human society, he had withdrawn to commune with himself. From self-acquaintance he had ascended to communicate with the eternal source of light. Faith had revealed to him the illusions of sight, and motives had sprung up in his mind of an energy in some degree commensurate with the invisible realities which she disclosed to him. His social feelings, which had traversed the earth unsatisfied, now found their resting-place in the Redeemer, who henceforth became the ever-present associate of his hopes and purposes. The new fabric of thoughts and of affections which arose within him rested on a basis more firm than he had ever found before, because cemented and sustained by divine, as well as by human, love.

It was, indeed, with deep dejection and a protracted self-conflict, that these new habits of mind were formed. Gradually and surely, however, the joyful spirit of the man re-assumed its dominion over him. The frolic of earlier years had subsided, and his gaiety assumed a more cautious and a gentler character. But as his self-government gained strength, and as peace diffused her holy calm over him, he rose to the enjoyment of that perfect freedom in which even *his* constitutional hilarity could indulge and disport itself. Still sadness flew at his approach; and, though the most devout of men, his mirth was as exhilarating as the first laughter of childhood.

God was in all his thoughts. His piety was allied not only to his serious pursuits, but to all the daily pleasures, and even to the whims and amusements of life. Inhabiting at once the visible and the invisible worlds, he rejoiced over his bright heritage in each. From the passing shadows of earth to the enduring substances of heaven, from secular cares to devotional exercises, he moved with such unexpected rapidity, that the web of his discourse would sometimes appear to be of an incongruous colouring and texture. But this fusion of religious and worldly thoughts enhanced the spirit with which he performed every duty, and the zest with which he welcomed every enjoyment.

Faintly as any portraiture can represent Mr. Wilberforce in his relations with other men, it is altogether impossible that he should be properly delineated in these dearer and more sacred relations which he had now formed. If any one shall refer to mere enthusiasm, the belief that the regenerate heart maintains a real, although it be a hidden, intercourse with a Being who has taken up His abode there, we shall leave the censor in undisturbed possession of his incredulity. If he shall deny that any sound mind

can entertain such a belief, we shall be content to assure him that there are, in the character of man, mysteries of which he has as yet no knowledge. But if he shall assert that the intercourse between the soul and the in-dwelling Paraclete cannot be recorded by the written confessions, experiences, or revelations of any self-observer whatever, we have no controversy with him, but the reverse.

It was the habit of Mr. Wilberforce to transcribe in a private journal the results of a most unsparing self-examination, not unmixed with some passages from those prayers in which he was engaged 'without ceasing.' The extracts from those manuscripts which his biographers have published, bear the impress of the most perfect sincerity. They attest his exquisite tenderness of conscience, his constant sense of present Deity, and his intense solicitude for an entire conformity to the Divine will. Doubtless these were inestimable aids to himself in his daily retrospect of his own spiritual progress. But, having served that purpose, would they not have been more wisely committed to the flames, than to the press?

Such publications too often foster in those who read them, a rank undergrowth of hypocrisy. For one man, who, like Mr. Wilberforce, will honestly endeavour to lay bare on paper the course of his life and the state of his heart, one hundred will make the same attempt dishonestly, having the fear or the hope of the biographer before their eyes. How fluent the acknowledgment of those faults which the reader will certainly regard as venial, while he admires the sagacity which has detected, the humility which has condemned, and the integrity which has acknowledged them!

Such disclosures, whether made to the confessor or to the world at large, are at best an illusion. No man has such an insight into his own circumstances, motives, and actions, or such leisure for describing them, or such powers of description, as to be able to afford to others the means of estimating, with any approach to accuracy, the exact merit or demerit of any one of his steps (and countless are the millions of these steps) in his whole moral and religious course.

Or, if the dissection of any man's soul could be completely effected, what eye but must turn away from the spectacle? Wisely has the Church proclaimed the sanctity of the confessional. Who would wish or dare to study this morbid anatomy? Who would not loathe the knowledge with which the memory of the priesthood, who study it professionally, is soiled and burthened? Who has courage enough to tell how far our mutual affection and esteem may depend on our imperfect knowledge of each other? The same creative wisdom which shelters from every human eye the processes of our animal

frame, has shrouded from observation the workings of our spiritual structure. The lowly and the contrite heart is a shrine in which He who inhabiteth eternity condescends to dwell, but in which any other presence would be an agony and a profanation.

We have three judges — our Maker, ourselves, and our neighbour. The first, looking on the heart, adjudicates infallibly. The second, from a comparison of acts, and of motives imperfectly understood, determines inferentially. The third, observing only the outward conduct, decides hypothetically. He who knew what was in man, confined us to the use of a single clue in forming any such hypothesis — ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ Whether we study Mr. Wilberforce, or any other human model, it is safest to follow this clue, and this alone.

Exceedingly dissimilar in abundance and in flavour, are the fruits to be gathered from the different branches of the vine, which, spreading out to the ends of the earth, and supplied with nutriment from the same prolific stem, are yet all more or less propped on some foreign stay. Some of those boughs hang like creepers from a stiff lattice-work of forms and ceremonies; and then the fruit is dry and penurious. Others cling for support to the austere aisles of conventual asceticism; and then the produce is harsh and unpalatable. Others, again, sink down and sustain themselves on a certain stunted and coarse shrubbery of irreverent, sensuous, and erotic familiarity; and then the vintage becomes watery and luscious. But some abide in the all-sustaining and animating trunk, with the firmest hold and in the closest union, and then the grapes they yield are ponderous and racy, like the clusters of Eshcoll, glowing with the richest bloom, and redolent of the most grateful odours.

The interpretation of the parable is to be found in every page of the five volumes, in which two of the sons of Mr. Wilberforce have recorded the life and writings of their father. Tried by literary laws alone, they must be condemned as overladen with a mass of superfluous details. But that redundancy was indispensable to an effect of a far higher kind than any mere artist ever had in view.

In these annals, or rather in this annual register of Mr. Wilberforce's acts, the unity of design consists in the constant exhibition and prominence of one great truth which it is impossible to express aright, except in the words of an inspired Apostle. It is the story of a life ‘hidden with Christ in God.’ What that hidden life really was in the person of William Wilberforce, none but himself could know, and few indeed could even plausibly conjecture. But even they who are the least able to solve the enigma, may acknowledge and feel that there was some secret spring of action on which his strength was altogether dependent.

It is indeed needless to allege any mystery (except as all things are mysterious) to account for the more obvious phenomena. It was no marvel that a man of great talents rejoiced to exercise and exhibit them in the House of Commons; or that a gentleman of large estate maintained his parliamentary independence; or that a person of extraordinary powers of conversation delighted in a generous hospitality; or that so fortunate a husband, father, brother, and friend, was perfectly amiable in those relations, and kind and temperate, just and true, in his dealings with the outer world. To the eye ranging over the mere surface of society, the master of almost every well-furnished mansion appears like an undistinguishable monad in the vast and decorous company of the obliging and the respectable.

But among the tasks to which frail man is subject, there is none to which his unaided strength is more unequal, than that of passing many years among these legitimate advantages, without ever being held in bondage by their enervating influence. Horse-hair shirts and a scourge for the rebellious flesh, monastic rule for the haughty spirit, poverty for the proud of purse, and for self-idolators silence and seclusion! But what is the outward discipline for him who, bidden to travel on the highways of life, can take no step heavenwards, unbeset or unobstructed by wealth, power, admiration, and popularity? How shall faith preserve her dominion over him to whom the world is daily offering whatever can most kindle the imagination, engage the understanding, or gratify ambition?

There is but one such corrective. It is to be found in that unbroken communion with the indwelling God, in which Mr. Wilberforce habitually lived. He 'endured as seeing Him who is invisible,' and as hearing Him who is inaudible. When most immersed in political cares, or in social enjoyments, he invoked and obeyed the voice which directed his path, while it tranquillised his mind. That voice was still at hand to soften his most indignant invectives, and to disarm his parliamentary polemics of all their bitterness. It reduced his most impassioned statements to the severe measure of truth. It chained down to many an irksome study a mind disposed to flutter about every topic, and to fasten upon none. It rendered him most tolerant of honest mediocrity and well-meant dulness, though he was one in whom every spark of genius instantly kindled a sympathetic flash. It made the keenest of critics the most charitable of judges. It confined to well-chosen channels the stream of bounty which his large heart was willing to pour profusely into all. It rendered every remotest interest of humanity sacred to him, although he was placed in



constant and immediate contact with whatever could most excite his self-love or his domestic affections. It enabled him to concentrate his benevolence within the narrow precincts of his own house, or of any adjacent cottage, while he was expanding his vision to the ends of the earth, and to remotest posterities. It at once chastised and animated the happy temperament with which he surveyed the ways and the works of men, and tempered without blunting the edge of the playful wit with which he depicted them. It taught him to rejoice, as a child, in the presence of a Father whom he much loved and altogether trusted, and whose approbation was infinitely more than an equivalent for whatever restraint, self-denial, labour, or sacrifice, obedience to His will might render necessary.

And thus were combined and reconciled the most profound sense of the vanity of human pursuits, and the most lively interest in them all. Obeying the precept which Mr. Taylor has given to his 'Statesman,' he observed a sabbatical day in every week, and a sabbatical hour in every day. Those days and hours gave him back to the world, not merely with recruited strength, but in a spirit the most favourable to the right discharge of his worldly duties. Things, in themselves the most trivial, wearisome, or even offensive, had, in his solitude, assumed a solemn interest from their connection with the present or the future happiness of mankind, while the alluring objects of human ambition had been brought into a humiliating contrast with the great ends for which life is given, and with the immortal hopes by which it should be sustained. Nothing can be more heartfelt than the delight with which he breathed the pure air of these devotional retirements. Nothing more soothing than the tranquillity which they diffused over a spirit harassed with the conflicts and the vexations which track the path of all who labour in the service of the commonwealth.

In such labours Mr. Wilberforce was sometimes preceded or followed, but was always accompanied, by that section of the Church (the word, in our use of it, embraces all Christian people), which has either assumed or acquired the distinctive title of 'Evangelical.' They claimed him as their champion and leader, and not unjustly. And yet the great change of character which he underwent, would be most unfairly represented as a mere passing over to their camp. He was exempt from bondage to that, or to any other religious party. Except in his immutable attachment to the great fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, he was very much a latitudinarian. Though conforming to the ritual of the Church of England, he occasionally attended the public worship of those who dissent from

her communion, and maintained a constant and affectionate fellowship with many of them. He travelled the highways of life, and conversed freely with all who thronged them. He knew little of polemical divinity, and seemed to care for it but little. His heart must quickly have overleapt the bounds of any narrow ecclesiastical alliance which he might have contracted. His Catholic spirit, sustained by a ready and capacious faith, was seldom harassed by controversy or overclouded by scepticism. No man ever sought out the meaning of the sacred writers with more conscientious care, and none ever acknowledged their divine authority with a more childlike docility. Finding in his own bosom an echo to every doctrine and every precept of the Gospel, he wisely and reverently received this evidence of their truth, and instead of consuming life in a protracted and still recurring scrutiny into the basis of his belief, he busied himself in erecting on it a superstructure of piety and active benevolence. Having solemnly consecrated his days to the culture and improvement of his own spiritual nature, and to the advancement of human happiness, he left it to men of a less favoured destiny to debate the government of the churches, or to untwist the finer intricacies of their creeds. 'The reformation of manners, and the abolition of the slave trade,' having been deliberately selected as his appropriate province of public service, he gave up to the faithful discharge of it every energy of his renovated soul, until labour, age, and infirmity dissolved his mortal prison-house, and set him free to partake of a purer and more perfect renovation.

'Seated in the open air, at the root of an old tree, in Holwood, just above the steep descent into the valley of Keston,' Mr. Wilberforce discussed with Mr. Pitt the probabilities of success in a warfare against the slave trade; and rose from that conference with a settled resolution to take the earliest opportunity which might present itself of announcing that design to the House of Commons.

This was no sudden impulse. While yet a schoolboy at Pocklington, he had contributed to a newspaper then published at York, a letter, protesting against 'the odious traffic in human flesh.' That early impression, from whatever source derived, had deepened with increasing age. During the first six years of his parliamentary life, he had instituted many inquiries into the real state of our colonial slavery, and had conceived and avowed the hope that he should live to redress the wrongs of the African race. He had investigated this gigantic evil, and had debated the arduous remedy with James Ramsay, the first confessor and proto-martyr of this faith, and with Ignatius Latrobe, the first of the missionaries who raised the banner of the Cross against it, and with Sir Charles and

Lady Middleton, who had convened, in their mansion in Kent, the first council ever held in this kingdom for the gathering and conduct of this new crusade.

In later days, agitation for the accomplishment of great political objects has taken a place among social arts. But sixty years since, it was among the inventions slumbering in the womb of time, taught by no professors, and illustrated by no examples. We have lived to see many of the most ancient and solid edifices, erected by the wisdom of our ancestors, totter at the blast of leagues, associations, speeches, reports, and editorial articles, like the towers of Jericho falling before the rams' horns of Joshua. But when Mr. Wilberforce and his friends met to deliberate on their enterprise, the contrast between the magnitude of their design and the poverty of their resources, demanded a faith scarcely inferior to that which encouraged the invaders of Palestine to assault with the sound of their trumpets, the towers built up by the children of Anak to the heavens. Truth, indeed, and justice were on their side; and in the flower of his youth, his eloquence, and his fame, Mr. Pitt had given the bright augury of his adhesion to their cause. But, after twenty years of ceaseless controversy had rolled away, the most sanguine of them was constrained to 'stand in awe of the powers of falsehood' and of commercial cupidity, and to acknowledge, that, in effecting so great a deliverance, God would not employ the rulers nor the mere rhetoricians of the world, but would use, as His instruments, His own devoted servants — men able to touch in the bosoms of others the sacred springs of action which were working in their own.

Among the foremost in this holy war, the names of Granville Sharpe and Thomas Clarkson are ever to be mentioned with peculiar reverence. To the former was committed the presidency of the society, charged with the duty of collecting and diffusing information respecting the real character of the slave trade. Mr. Clarkson became the zealous and indefatigable agent of that body. To Mr. Wilberforce was assigned the general superintendence of the cause, both in and out of Parliament.

In 1789 he first proposed the abolition of the slave trade to the House of Commons, in a speech which Burke rewarded with one of those imperishable eulogies which he alone had the skill and the authority to pronounce. But a victory over Guinea merchants was not to be numbered amongst the triumphs of eloquence. Unable to withstand the current of popular feeling which the novelty, as much as the nature, of the proposal had stirred, they sagaciously resolved to await the subsidence of this unwonted enthusiasm; soliciting only a suspension of the measure until Parliament

should be in possession of the facts which they undertook to substantiate.

To this Fabian policy, ever changing in its aspect, but uniform in its design, the slave traders were indebted for the prolongation of their guilty commerce. Nearly two years were worn away in the examination of their witnesses; and when Mr. Wilberforce had, with difficulty, succeeded in transferring the inquiry from the bar of the House of Commons to the less dilatory tribunal of a Select Committee, he had still to struggle laboriously for permission to produce testimony in refutation of the evidence of his antagonists. It was not, therefore, till April, 1791, that the question of the abolition of the trade was directly brought to issue; when a proof was given of the foresight with which the Guinea merchants had calculated on the gradual subsidence of the public indignation. Ominous were the forebodings with which the friends of Mr. Wilberforce looked forward to the approaching debate. By the Master of St. John's College, Cambridge, his position was compared to that of 'Episcopus in the infamous synod of Dort;' while John Wesley exhorted him to proceed to the conflict as a new 'Athanasius *contra mundum*.' Those divines had well interpreted the temper of the times. The slave traders triumphed by an overwhelming majority. In the political tumults of those days the voice of humanity was no longer audible, and common sense had ceased to discharge its office. The bad faith and fickleness of the French Government had involved St. Domingo in confusion and bloodshed; and because the elements of society had broken loose in that colony, it was judged dangerous to arrest the accumulation of the materials of similar discord within our own! Even Mr. Pitt avowed his opinion that it was wise to await more tranquil times before the slave trade should be abolished. It was in vain that Mr. Wilberforce urged on the House of Commons, in 1792, the true inference from the calamitous state of St. Domingo. His proposals were again defeated. Those were days in which every change was branded as a revolution, and when the most sacred rules of moral or political conduct, if adduced in favour of any reform, were denounced and abhorred as 'French principles.'

Reason, however, having gradually regained her dominion, the procrastinating system of the slave traders assumed a new shape, and obtained, in the person of Mr. Dundas, its most formidable advocate. With perverse ingenuity, he proposed to substitute a gradual for an immediate abolition; fixing a remote period for the entire cessation of the trade. Yet even in this cautious form the bill found a cold reception in the House of Peers, where, after consuming the session in the examination of two witnesses, their



Lordships postponed the measure till the following year. With the arrival of that period, Mr. Wilberforce had to sustain three successive defeats. The House of Commons rejected first, the main proposal of an immediate abolition of the trade; then, a motion restricting the number of slaves to be annually imported into our own colonies; and, finally, a plan for prohibiting the employment of British capital in the introduction of slaves into foreign settlements. His perseverance, however, was not fruitless. A deep impression had been made by his past efforts; and, in 1794, the House of Commons, for the first time, passed a bill of immediate abolition. The defenders of the slave trade were again rescued from the impending blow by the interposition of the Peers; amongst whom a melancholy pre-eminence was thenceforth to be assigned to a member of the Royal House, who lived to redeem his early error, by assenting, in the decline of life, to the introduction of the law for the abolition of slavery.

Thus far the difficulties of the contest had chiefly arisen from the influence or the arts of his enemies; but Mr. Wilberforce had now to sustain the more depressing weight of the secession of one of his most effective auxiliaries. Suffering under nervous debility and influenced by other motives, of which an explanation is to be found in his 'History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade,' Mr. Clarkson was reluctantly compelled to retire from the field. With what deep regret he abandoned the contest may be learnt from his own volumes; and earnest as must have been his aspiration for its success, he was unable, during the eleven years which followed, to resume his place amidst the champions of the cause, though he lived to witness and to share in the triumph.

Providence had gifted Mr. Wilberforce with greater nervous energy; and though sustaining labours not less severe, and a public responsibility incomparably more anxious than that under which the health of his colleague had given way, he returned to the conflict with unabated resolution. In 1795, and in the following year, he again laboured in vain to induce the House of Commons to resume the ground which they had already taken; nor could his all-believing charity repress the honest indignation with which he records that a body of his supporters, sufficient to have carried the bill, had been enticed from their places in the House, by the new opera of the 'Two Hunchbacks,' in which a conspicuous part was assigned to the great vocalist of that day, Signor Portogallo. A rivalry more formidable even than that of the Haymarket had now arisen. Parodying his father's celebrated maxim, Mr. Pitt was engaged in conquering Europe in the West Indies; and, with the acquisition of new colonies, the slave trade acquired an in-

creased extent, and its supporters had obtained augmented Parliamentary interest. The result was to subject Mr. Wilberforce, in the debate of 1797, to a defeat more signal than any of those which he had hitherto endured. His opponents eagerly seized this opportunity to render it irreparable. On the motion of Mr. Charles Ellis, an address to the Crown was carried, which transferred to the legislative bodies of the different colonies the task of preparing for the very measure which they had leagued together to frustrate. It was with extreme difficulty, and not without the most strenuous remonstrances, that Mr. Wilberforce dissuaded Mr. Pitt from lending his support to this extravagant project. To increase the value of his Transatlantic conquests, he had thrown open the intercourse between our colonies and those of Spain, and had offered, in the newly-acquired islands, fresh lands, on which the slave traders might effect further settlements; and though, by ceaseless importunity, Mr. Wilberforce obtained the revocation of the first of these measures, and the suspension of the second, yet the cupidity of the slave traders, and their influence in the national councils, were largely increased by these new prospects of gain. Their augmented powers were attested by the ill success which attended Mr. Wilberforce's annual motions in 1798 and 1799.

The contest had now endured for twelve years. Ten successive efforts had been fruitlessly made to obtain the concurrence of the Legislature in arresting this gigantic evil. Hopeless of success by perseverance in the same tactics, and yet incapable of retiring from the duty he had assumed, Mr. Wilberforce now addressed himself to the project of effecting, by a compromise, the end which seemed unattainable by direct and open hostilities. The year 1800 was accordingly consumed in negotiations with the chief West India proprietors, of which the object was to win their concurrence in limiting the duration of the trade to a period of five or at most seven years. Delusive hopes of success cheered him for a while, but it was ere long apparent that the phalanx of his enemies was too firm to be penetrated. The peace of Amiens had brought to the Court of London a minister from the French Republic, who encouraged the hope that it might be possible to arrange a general convention of all the European powers for the abandonment of the traffic. Long and anxious were the endeavours made by Mr. Wilberforce for maturing this project. It is needless to say that they were unavailing. The season of 1801 was about to close, and the end in view appeared more distant than at any former time.

Mr. Addington seems to have regarded the great expedition to St. Domingo as a kind of sedative, which would paralyse the resistance of the oppressed negroes throughout the West Indies; and

feared to check the operation of this anodyne. The charm which these medical analogies exercised over the then occupant of the Treasury bench did not, however, extend its influence to Mr. Wilberforce. He announced his purpose to resume the Parliamentary contest in the year 1802, when the attempt was accordingly made, though under the most discouraging circumstances. The wit and eloquence of Mr. Canning, remonstrating against the settlement of new lands in Trinidad, had been repelled by the passive resistance of the then Minister, and the time occupied in this discussion had delayed, until the dissolution of Parliament rendered impossible, the further progress of the Abolition Act. The tumult of war in the succeeding year silenced every other sound; and the advocate of the slaves was condemned to a reluctant silence, whilst every voice was raised in reprobation of Bonaparte, and in resentment of the insult offered to Lord Whitworth.

At length the auguries of success became distinct and frequent. Mr. Pitt had returned to office; the dread of Jacobinism no longer haunted the public mind, but, above all, the proprietors in the Caribbean Islands had made the discovery, that, by encouraging the slave trade, they were creating in the planters of the conquered colonies the most dangerous rivals in their monopoly of the British market. The union with Ireland had added a new host of friends. Not a single representative from that country withheld his assistance. Amidst all these encouragements, Mr. Wilberforce again appealed to the House of Commons, and carried the bill with overwhelming majorities. Cordial were now the congratulations of his friends of every class, from the aged John Newton of St. Mary Woolnoth, to Jeremy Bentham, whose celebrity as the most original thinker of his age was then in its early dawn. But the Peers had not yet yielded to the influence of Christian or Moral Philosophy. 'The debate,' says Mr. Wilberforce's Diary, 'was opened by the Chancellor in a very threatening speech, because over-rating property, and full of all moral blunders. He showed himself to labour with feelings as if he was the legitimate guardian of property — Lord Stanhope's a wild speech — Lord Hawkesbury spoke honourably and handsomely — Westmoreland like himself, coarse and bullying, but not without talent. Grenville spoke like a man of high and honourable principles, who, like a truly great statesman, regarded right and politic as identical.' Blunders and bullying, however, prevailed; and the question was adjourned to the following session.

Before its arrival Lord Brougham, then travelling on the Continent as an American, and even 'venturing to pass a week in the same house with several French Generals,' had offered Mr. Wilber-

force his assistance in pursuing various collateral inquiries throughout Holland and Germany, and in 'the great scenes of bondage (as it is called) Poland, Russia, and Hungary.' To this most potent ally many others were added. Mr. Stephen and Mr. Ma-caulay were unremitting in the use of the pen and the press. The classical knowledge of Mr. Robert Grant was put under contribution, to illustrate the state of slavery in the ancient world; and even the daughters of Lord Muncaster were enlisted in the service of methodising the contents of all African travels, ancient and modern. High and sanguine as were the hopes of Mr. Wilberforce, he had yet another disappointment to sustain. The House of Commons of 1805, receding from their former resolutions, rejected his bill, and drew from him, in his private journals, language of distress and pain such as no former defeat had been able to extort.

The death of Mr. Pitt approached; an event which the most calm and impartial judgment must now regard as the necessary precursor of the liberation of Africa. For seventeen years, since the commencement of the contest, he had guided the counsels of this country. Successful in almost every other Parliamentary conflict, and triumphing over the most formidable antagonist, he had been compelled, by the Dundases, and Jenkinsons, and Roses, who on every other subject quailed under his eye, to go to the grave without obliterating that which he himself had denounced as the deepest stain on our national character, and the most enormous guilt recorded in the history of mankind. During that long period, millions of innocent victims had perished. Had he perilled his political existence on the issue, no rational man can doubt that an amount of guilt, of misery, of disgrace, and of loss, would have been spared to England and to the civilised world, such as no other man ever had it in his power to arrest.

The political antagonists of Mr. Pitt were men of a different temper; and although in the Cabinet of Mr. Fox there were not wanting those who opposed him on this subject, yet it was an opposition which, in the full tide of success, he could afford to disregard and to pardon. Had it endangered for a single session the abolition of the slave trade, these names, eminent as one at least of them was, would infallibly have been erased from the list of his Administration. Mr. Fox's Ministry had scarcely taken their places, when Lord Grenville introduced into the House of Lords, and speedily carried, two bills, of which the first abolished the slave trade with all foreign powers, and the second forbade the employment in that traffic of any British shipping which had not already been engaged in it; whilst the House of Commons resolved that the slave trade was 'contrary to the principles of justice,



humanity, and sound policy; and that they would proceed to abolish it with all practicable expedition.' Faithfully was this pledge redeemed. The death of Mr. Fox did not even delay its fulfilment. Early in 1807 that great statesman, to whom at the distance of twenty-six years it was reserved to propose the abolition of slavery itself, introduced into the House of Commons a bill which placed on the British statute-book the final condemnation of the trade in slaves. Amidst the acclamations of Parliament, the enthusiastic congratulations of his friends, and the applauses of the world, Mr. Wilberforce witnessed the success of the great object of his life with emotions, and in a spirit, which could not have found admission into a mind less pure and elevated than his own. The friendly shouts of victory which arose on every side were scarcely observed or heeded in the delightful consciousness of having rendered to mankind a service of unequalled magnitude. He retired to prostrate himself before the Giver of all good things, in profound humility and thankfulness, — wondering at the unmerited bounty of God, who had carried him through twenty years of unremitting labour, and bestowed on him a name of imperishable glory.

There are those who have disputed his title to the station thus assigned to him. Amongst the most recent is to be numbered one whose esteem is of infinitely too high value to be lightly disregarded, and whose judgment will carry with it no common authority. Mr. Serjeant Talfourd, in his 'Life of Charles Lamb,' referring to an interview which took place between Lamb and Mr. Clarkson, uses the following expressions: — 'There he also met with the true annihilator of the slave trade, Thomas Clarkson, who was then enjoying a necessary respite from his stupendous labours in a cottage on the borders of Ulswater. Lamb had no taste for oratorical philanthropy, but he felt the grandeur and simplicity of Clarkson's character.'

The contrast which is thus drawn between 'the true annihilator' of the slave trade, and the oratorical philanthropist who declaimed against it, might provoke and justify a retaliation, from which we judge it wise, because charitable, to abstain. Let it rather be acknowledged that Mr. Talfourd's disrelish for oratorical philanthropy is a reasonable and honest aversion. But neither let it be concealed that the 'philanthropy of agitation' is not generally entitled to much higher esteem. It is for the common good that the merit of all such services should be brought down from the illuminated pinnacles of hyperbole, to the level of unadorned truth.

We claim no place for Mr. Wilberforce among the heroes of

benevolence, on the ground of his parliamentary labours in the cause of Africa. Why not frankly admit, what everybody knows, that the conduct of any great cause in the House of Commons is contended for by the members of it with eager rivalry, and that the celebrity and the influence which wait on the successful competitor, are such as might vanquish any common amount of apathy or of idleness. A gentleman of fortune may give himself up to labour during half his life in that assembly to emancipate a continent, or to repeal a corn law, without making one formidable enemy, or losing a single friend, or missing one night's rest, or foregoing a solitary dinner.

Neither is the noble army of martyrs recruited from that busy class, who, taking for their point of departure some central committee in London, and for their periphery the circuit of our provincial cities, and for their conveyance our commodious public vehicles, and for their solace much local hospitality, and for their support a reasonable salary, are thus enabled to earn the applauses of crowds, and the eulogies of poets.

The fact is, and we may all as well avow it, that the moral sublime does not belong to our age and country. The labours which the learned Serjeant admires as 'stupendous,' were probably far less 'stupendous' during each of the eight or nine years of their continuance, than those of his biographer in his chambers or on his Oxford circuit. 'The true annihilator of the slave trade' had, during the eleven last and most irksome years of the contest, just as much, and just as little, to do with it as Mr. Talfourd himself.

But woe be to them whose joy is in the invasion of great names, and in the overthrow of great reputations! William Wilberforce was one of the legitimate heirs of immortality, although his path is in appearance the same with that which has since been trodden by our Daniel O'Connells and our Richard Cobdens. Thomas Clarkson is a name to be for ever loved and honoured, despite the vulgar herd who have imitated and rivalled his course of public service. The just and genuine praise of both is the same. Their exertions for the abolition of the slave trade were but in each as a single strain in concord with that love to God and love to man which, in the heart of each, rose in one unbroken harmony, from early youth to extreme old age. Their common title to enduring fame is, that in a gracious acknowledgment and reward of those holy offices, God himself assigned to them, not the most arduous, and certainly not the most self-denying, but the foremost places in that enterprise—an enterprise, the memory of which could be preserved to the remotest times only by being impersonated in

some illustrious names, and therefore associated with theirs, not by any human caprice or fortuitous accident, but by the selection and appointment of the Master they served. And therefore will William Wilberforce be remembered with affectionate reverence as long as the history and the language of England shall endure, maugre such sarcasm as that which we have quoted; and Thomas Clarkson will be honoured by our latest posterity, in defiance of the extravagance of his eulogists, and though degraded by the citizens of London in their Guildhall to the level of Beckford, the insolent poltroon who stands beside him there.

It was not in the nature of Mr. Wilberforce to concentrate all his thoughts on this, or on any other single design, however magnificent. He could not be a passive spectator of any undertaking, which had the welfare of mankind for its object. 'God has set before me the reformation of my country's manners,' was one part of the solemn self-dedication of his twenty-seventh year, and he descended to the grave with the unalterable conviction, that such was the will of God concerning him.

The forty-seven years which intervened between those epochs, embrace the most momentous era of modern history. Within that period, greater changes occurred in the internal economy of Great Britain, than had been witnessed in any two preceding centuries. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, revenue, and population expanded with an unexampled elasticity. Never before had the material world been made to pay so large a tribute to the material wants of mankind. Under the half magical power of the steam-engine, works which would have baffled the muscular strength of all the inhabitants of the globe united, were performed in a narrow district of this narrow island, with an ease, a precision, and a rapidity, emulating some of the mighty operations of nature. Wealth, such as avarice had scarcely pictured in her dreams, was accumulated in those centres of mechanical industry, and the higher class of English society, commercial as well as noble, revelled in a sumptuousness of living, for which a description or an example could be found nowhere but in the fabulous East.

Mr. Wilberforce was hardly a far-sighted philosopher; yet behind this brilliant spectacle, his prescience saw the lowering of that storm, the approach of which is now confessed by the forebodings of every thoughtful man in Europe. His meditations and his discourse continually pointed to the still widening gulph between the two extremes of English society. He mourned over the coming conflict between vice, ignorance, poverty, and discontent on the one side, and selfishness, sensuality, hardness of heart, and

corruption on the other—between our loathsome cellars and our luxuriant palaces. But it was not in his nature to abandon himself to that or to any other ineffectual grief.

To stay the advance of the plague, he addressed himself to the promotion of every scheme which ingenuity, his own or others, could devise for the religious, and intellectual, and social improvement, either of the rich or of the poor. While Watt and Arkwright were astounding the world with the miracles which mechanical art can produce by the aid of commercial capital, Mr. Wilberforce was aiding Bell and Lancaster, under the conduct of all the churches, conforming or non-conforming, to develop the prodigies of mutual instruction. Factories did not spring up more rapidly in Leeds and Manchester, than schemes of benevolence beneath his roof; and though many years have passed since the throng which daily gathered there has been dispersed, it is still impossible to revive the remembrance of those strange assemblages, without a smile which will check for a moment the more serious feelings with which they are associated.

In the study might be seen the projector of the Bible Society, who, in virtue of his privilege of the *entrée*, was seated near the table, upon and beneath which stood piles of subscription lists, plans, and reports from countless kindred associations. Eloquent deputies from Hibernian schools, were, meanwhile, restlessly expecting their audience in the drawing-room. In the ante-chamber, the advocates for an improved prison discipline were themselves undergoing a sort of temporary imprisonment. But it was in the spacious library that philanthropic speculation rose to its highest tide. There were ladies anxious to explain their plans of visiting the sick, Quakers under a concern for transported convicts, the founders of savings banks, missionaries from Serampore and the Red River, and everywhere conspicuous amidst the crowd, the ever-busy and well-satisfied countenance of his excellent friend ‘Mendicity Martin,’ so called from his presiding over the whole department of mendicancy in this great eleemosynary government. And then would emerge from his closet Mr. Wilberforce, the prime minister of that disjointed state, passing from one group to another, not without a smile, which revealed to the initiated his involuntary perception of the comic aspect of the scene, but still more clearly disclosing by his voice, his gestures, and his kindling eye, the generous resentment, the glowing admiration, or the tender sympathy with which he listened to one and another tale of injustice, of self-denial, or of woe, until, gradually, the whole levy had withdrawn, not merely forgiving their host the waste of the morning, but more devoted than ever to a leader, whose exquisite



courtesy would have atoned for any thing, even if his mature wisdom, his almost feminine tenderness, and his childlike gaiety, had not swept away every less delightful remembrance.

There are those who can smile with him at the grotesque appearance occasionally assumed by the vast machinery established amongst us for the propagation of Christian knowledge and for the relief of human wretchedness, but who never glow, as he did, with faith in the principle, hope of the success, or love for the agents of that great voluntary system. And yet there is no other direction in which it is easy to regard the future destinies of England with complacency, or even with composure. Amidst the sins and the miseries of our land, it is no light solace to remember, that in every city and village, and in almost every private family in the enjoyment of competency, some steady effort is made to diffuse the light of the gospel, and to increase the sum of temporal comforts amongst all over whom the dominion of Great Britain extends, or to whom her influence reaches. But the aged remember when, as yet, these things were not, and were not anticipated.

Of the schemes of public benevolence which were matured or projected during the half century which followed the peace of 1783, there was scarcely one of any magnitude in which Mr. Wilberforce was not largely engaged. Whether churches and clergymen were to be multiplied, or the Scriptures circulated, or missions sent to the ends of the earth, or national education established, or the condition of the poor improved, or Ireland civilised, or good discipline established in gaols, or obscure genius and piety enabled to emerge, or in whatever other form philanthropy and patriotism laboured for the improvement of his country, or of the world,—his sanction, his eloquence, and his advice, were still regarded as indispensable to success. No one man, however, nor any one hundred men, could have assumed the actual superintendence of all the complicated affairs in which he was thus immersed. To have conducted, or understood, or even to have remembered them all, would have been to live in the habitual performance of a miracle. His real position was that of a minister of public charity, holding his office by popular acclamation, and delegating the more toilsome details of that laborious administration to the friends and the partisans who rejoiced to co-operate with him. He maintained his authority over them by their affectionate reverence, by his own unfailing bounty, and by the spell which he exercised over every one whom he employed and trusted. No department in the state was ever so zealously served, or so well administered. Yet it is impossible to exhibit in any connected narrative the series and succession of these labours which have no other connection or mutual depen-

dency than that which they derive from the identity of the agent, and from the unity of his general design. The biographers of Mr. Wilberforce have had no romantic tale to tell, nor have they been required to exhibit human virtue on any gigantic or inimitable scale. In promoting his schemes of beneficence, Mr. Wilberforce moved with the graceful freedom which seemed to exclude every notion of effort or of self-denial. Even in his most irksome works of mercy, the refined ease of a gentleman attended him, for to be turgid or ostentatious, was as impossible to him as to be unfeeling. He would render the lowliest offices of personal kindness to his domestic servants, or to any neighbouring cottager, with the same flowing courtesy with which he interchanged the amenities of society among his equals. During many years of his life, he devoted to acts of munificence from a third to a fourth part of his annual income, and the money so freely given was ever accompanied by some greeting so kindly or so gay, as to soothe every painful sense of obligation.

It must be confessed, however, that the joyful promptitude with which he rendered every other service of love, forsook him when the press was to be the instrument of his philanthropy. To build up a literary edifice, in which chapter was to rise upon chapter, in architectural proportion, was a task which suited him as ill as the labours of the collier would agree with the taste of an *aéronaut*. Yet the year 1797 witnessed the completion of an 8vo. volume from his pen, bearing on its front the title of ‘A Practical View of the prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes of this Country contrasted with real Christianity.’

Tradition informs us, that this book was written under the roof of two of the dearest and wisest of his friends, who had resort to many affectionate artifices to promote this unusual concentration of his discursive thoughts. Sometimes, when passages of peculiar energy burst, in all their native warmth, from his lips, the lady of the house would seize the happy moment, and become herself his amanuensis. Sometimes she would gather up the scattered leaves with which her guest had enriched her drawing-room, or her conservatory, and when the hour seemed propitious to composition, would purposely leave him in an undisturbed and welcome solitude. The story (pleasantly exaggerated perhaps) concludes with the statement, that when, at length, she saw the volume complete upon her table, she declared herself a convert to the opinion, that a fortuitous concourse of atoms might, by some felicitous chance, combine themselves into the most perfect of forms,—a moss-rose, or a bird of paradise.

Such a treatise, by so conspicuous a member of the House of Commons, could not but excite a lively interest at the time of its appearance. But if there be sincerity in this world, it is in the selection of the books we purchase, and neither rank nor any other accident, in the circumstances of any author, ever yet produced the sale of fifty editions of so large a work within the same number of years. It was little marvellous that ecclesiastics of every rank and section greeted with the loudest applause the advent of an ally at once so powerful and so unexpected. But that can have been no common production, which compelled the author of 'The Pursuits of Literature' to throw aside his stilts, and to pour out a heartfelt tribute of praise in his unpolluted mother tongue. Still less is it possible to question the inherent life and energy of an appeal, which drew from Edmund Burke his grateful acknowledgments for the solace shed by it over the last two days of his eventful life.

Yet they who shall search this book for deep theology, or profound investigation, will be disappointed. 'Philosophy,' says Abraham Tucker, 'may be styled the art of marshalling the ideas in the understanding, and religion that of disciplining the imagination.' In the first of these arts Mr. Wilberforce did not excel; in the second he has scarcely ever been surpassed. The first three chapters of his work are evidently inferior to the rest. He is there upon a debateable land, contrasting the inspired text with the prevalent opinions of his age on some points of Christian doctrine. The accuracy of his own interpretations, or rather of those which are received by that part of the Church of England usually designated as Evangelical, being assumed throughout these discussions, they will scarcely convince such as read the New Testament in a different sense. But when he emerges from these defiles, and enters upon broader ground, comprising the precepts of revelation with the conventional morality of the world's favoured children, he speaks (for it is throughout a spoken rather than a written language) with a persuasive energy which breathes the very spirit of the inspired volume.

Here all is the mature result of profound meditation; and his thoughts, if not always methodical and compact, are at least always poured out in words so earnest and affectionate, that philanthropy never yet assumed a more appropriate or a more eloquent style. It is the expostulation of a brother. Unwelcome truth is delivered with scrupulous fidelity, and yet with a tenderness which demonstrates that the monitor feels the pain which he reluctantly inflicts. It is this tone of human sympathy breathing in every page which constitutes the essential charm of this book; and it is to

the honour of our common nature that we are all disposed to love best that teacher, who, with the deepest compassion for our sorrows, has the least indulgence for the errors or the faults by which they have been occasioned.

Whatever objections may have been raised to Mr. Wilberforce's theological opinions, there is but one which can be stated to the exegetical part of his treatise. It is, that he has erected a standard too pure and too sublime for this world's use, and proposes a scheme of Utopian perfection which is calculated, by discouraging hope, to repress exertion. The obvious answer is, that the design of every rule which can be given for the conduct of life is to afford an accurate measure of our deflection from the path of duty, and a trustworthy guide for our return. Any system of religion or ethics which tolerated the slightest compromise with moral evil, would be so far subversive of its own purpose; although it is from the general prevalence of moral evil that such systems derive their existence and their value. To mark distinctly the departure of the luxurious, busy, care-worn, and ambitious age to which he belonged, from the theory and the practice of Christian morality, was the task which Mr. Wilberforce proposed to himself. Never were the sensuality, the gloom, and the selfishness which fester below the polished surface of society, brought into more vivid contrast with the faith, and hope, and charity, which in their combination form the Christian character; and never was that contrast drawn with a firmer hand, with a more tender spirit, or with a purer aspiration for the happiness of mankind.

To all these labours for the benefit of the world, were added others, addressed, though less directly, to the same end, and undertaken and pursued in a similar spirit. In his political career, Mr. Wilberforce never ceased to act and to speak as one to whom Providence had confided the sacred trust of advancing the moral character, and promoting the welfare of his age and nation.

As a public speaker, he enjoyed great and well-merited celebrity. But it was not in the House of Commons that his powers in this kind were exhibited to the greatest advantage. In all the deliberations of Parliament may be discerned a tacit reference to the Royal citation which has brought together the two Houses 'for the despatch of divers weighty and urgent affairs.' The knights and burgesses are emphatically men of business, and have but little indulgence for anything which tasks the understanding, addresses itself to the heart, or elevates the imagination;—least of all for an ostentatious display of the resources of the speaker's mind. He who can contribute a pertinent fact, or a weighty argument, may safely repose in the region of the bathos. The aspi-



rant for fame must excel in perspicuity of statement, in promptitude in the exposure or invention of sophistry, and in a ready though abstemious use of wit, ridicule, and sarcasm.

In these requisites for success Mr. Wilberforce was deficient. He had not much statistical knowledge, nor was he familiar with any branch of Political Economy. His argumentation was not usually perspicuous, and was seldom energetic. The habit of digression, the parenthetical structure of his periods, and the minute qualifications suggested by his reverence for truth, impeded the flow of his discourse, and frequently obscured its design. His exquisite perception of the ridiculous kept him in the exercise of habitual self-denial, and the satire which played upon his countenance was suppressed by his universal charity, before it could form itself into language. With these disadvantages he was still a great Parliamentary speaker; and there were occasions when, borne by some sudden impulse, or carried by diligent preparation, over the diffuseness which usually encumbered him, he delighted and subdued his hearers.

His reputation in the House of Commons rested, however, chiefly upon other grounds. In that assembly, any one speaks with immense advantage whose character, station, or presumed knowledge is such as to give importance to his opinions. The dogmas of some men are of incomparably more value there than the logic of others; and no member, except the leaders of the great contending parties, addressed the House with an authority equal to that of Mr. Wilberforce. The homage rendered to his personal character, his command over a small but compact party, his representation of the county of York, the confidence of the great religious bodies in every part of England, and, above all, his independent neutrality, gave to his suffrage an almost unexampled value. It was usually delivered with a demeanour of conscious dignity, unalloyed by the slightest tinge of arrogance, and contrasting oddly enough with the insignificance of his slight and shapeless person. Yet the spell he exercised was partly drawn from still another source. Parliamentary eloquence is essentially colloquial; and, when most embellished or sustained, is rather prolonged discourse than oratory properly so called. It was by a constant, perhaps an unavoidable observance of this tone, that Mr. Wilberforce exercised the charm which none could resist, but which many were unable to explain. His speeches in the House of Commons bore the closest resemblance to his familiar conversation. There was the same earnest sincerity of manner, the same natural and varied cadences, the same animation and ease, and the same tone of polished society; and while his affectionate, lively,

and graceful talk flowed on without the slightest appearance of effort or study, criticism itself scarcely perceived, or at least excused, the redundancy of his language.

But, as we have said, it was not in Parliament that his powers as a public speaker had their highest exercise. His habitual trains of thought, and the feelings which he most deeply cherished, could rarely find utterance in that scene of strife and turmoil. At the hustings, where the occasion justified the use of a more didactic style, there was much simple majesty in the uncompromising avowal of his principles, and in the admonitions suggested by them. He there applied the grave eloquence of the pulpit to secular uses. But it was in the great assemblages held for religious and charitable objects that the current of his eloquence moved with the greatest impetus and volume. In them he at once felt his way to the hearts of his eager and delighted hearers. In the fulness of the charity which believeth all things, giving credit to the multitude for feelings as pure and benevolent as his own, he possessed the power of gracefully and decorously laying aside the reserve which habitually shrouded from the irreverent and profane the more secret and cherished feelings of his heart. Nothing was ever more singular, or less framed upon any previous model of eloquence, than were some of those addresses in which the chastened style of the House of Commons (of all assemblies the most fastidious) was employed to give utterance to thoughts which, though best becoming the deepest retirement, retained, even in these crowded scenes, their delicacy not less than their beauty. The most ardent of his expressions bore the impress of indubitable sincerity, and of calm and sober conviction; and were instantly distinguished by the instinct of his hearers from the less genuine enthusiasm of others who dissolved their meaning in ecstasy, and soared beyond the reach of human comprehension into the third heavens of artificial rapture. It was an example perhaps as full of danger as of interest. Not a few are the offensive imitations which have been attempted of a model which could be followed successfully, or even innocently, by none whose bosoms did not really burn with the same heavenly affections, who did not practise the same severe observance of truth, or whose taste had not been refined to the same degree of sensibility.

No part of Mr. Wilberforce's biography will be read with greater interest than that which describes his political career. Holding for forty-three years a conspicuous place in the House of Commons, the current of public affairs, as it flowed past him, reflected his character in a thousand different forms; and exhibited, on the most tumultuous theatre of action, the influence of those sacred

principles, with the workings of which we are for the most part conversant only in more quiet and secluded scenes.

‘From any one truth all truth may be inferred,’—a Baconian text, from which certain commentators of the last century concluded, that he who possessed a Bible might dispense with Grotius and with Locke; and that all other writings should disappear at the approach of the Scriptures, as they had once vanished at the presence of the Koran. The opinion which precisely reverses this doctrine is recommended by less ingenuity, and by no better logic. Mr. Wilberforce was far too wise a man to imagine that any revelation from God could be designed to supersede the duty of patient research into all other sources of knowledge. But neither did he ever reject the vast body of ethical precepts delivered by Divine inspiration, as irrelevant to the political questions with which he was daily conversant. He invariably brought every conclusion drawn from other studies to the test of their consistency with the sacred oracles. They supplied him with an ordinate by which to measure every curve. They gave him what most public men egregiously want,—the firm hold of a body of unchanging opinions. In his case this advantage was peculiarly momentous. His neglected education, his inaptitude for severe and continuous mental labour, the strength of his sympathies, and his strong personal attachment to Mr. Pitt, all seemed to give the promise of a ductile, vacillating, uncertain course. Yet in reality no man ever pursued in Parliament a career more entirely guided by fixed principles, or more frequently at variance with his habitual inclinations. His connections, both public and private, not less than his natural temper, disposed him to that line of policy which, in our days, assumes the title of ‘conservative;’ yet his conduct was almost invariably such as is now distinguished by the epithets ‘liberal and reforming.’ A Tory by predilection, he was in action a Whig. His heart was with Mr. Pitt; but on all the cardinal questions of the times, his vote was given to Mr. Fox.

This conflict of sentiment with principle did not, however, commence in the earlier days of Mr. Pitt’s administration; for the mortal foe of Jacobinism entered the House of Commons as a Parliamentary reformer; and Mr. Wilberforce executed a rapid journey from Nice to London in the winter of 1784 to support, by his eloquence and his vote, the Reform Bill which his friend introduced in the session of that year. The following broken sentences from his diary record the result:—‘At Pitt’s all day—it goes on well—sat up late chatting with Pitt—his hopes of the country and noble patriotic heart—to town—Pitt’s—House—Parliamentary reform—

terribly disappointed and beat — extremely fatigued — spoke extremely ill but commended — called at Pitt's — met poor Wyvil.'

Of this 'ill spoken' but 'commended speech,' the following sentence is preserved:—'The consequence of this measure,' he said, 'will be that the freedom of opinion will be restored, and party connexions in great measure vanish, for party on one side begets party on the other;'—a prophecy which, rightly understood, is perceptibly advancing towards its fulfilment.

The ill success of Mr. Pitt's proposal did not damp the zeal of Mr. Wilberforce. He introduced into the House of Commons, and even succeeded in carrying there, two of the most important enactments of the Reform Bill, in which, at the distance of nearly half a century, Lord Grey obtained the reluctant concurrence of the Peers. One of these measures provided for a general registration of voters; the others for holding the poll, at the same time, in several different parts of the same county.

From the commencement of the war with France is to be dated the dissolution of the political alliance which had, till then, been maintained with little interruption between Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Pitt. Though partaking more deeply than most men of the prevalent abhorrence of the revolutionary doctrines of that day, Mr. Wilberforce's resistance to the war was decided and persevering. A written message from Mr. Pitt, delivered on the first debate on that question, 'assuring him that his speaking then might do irreparable mischief, and promising that he should have another opportunity before war should be declared,' defeated his purpose of protesting publicly against the approaching hostilities. Accident prevented the redemption of Mr. Pitt's pledge, but Mr. Wilberforce's purposes remained unshaken. 'Our Government,' he says, in a letter on this subject, 'had been for some months before the breaking out of the war negotiating with the principal European powers, for the purpose of obtaining a joint representation to France, assuring her that if she would formally engage to keep within her limits, and not molest her neighbours, she should be suffered to settle her own internal government and constitution without interference. I never was so earnest with Mr. Pitt on any other occasion as I was in my entreaties, before the war broke out, that he would openly declare in the House of Commons that he had been, and then was, negotiating this treaty. I urged on him that the declaration might possibly produce an immediate effect in France, where it was manifest there prevailed an opinion that we were meditating some interference with their internal affairs, and the restoration of Louis to his throne. At all events, I hoped that in the first lucid interval, France would see how little



reason there was for continuing the war with Great Britain; and at least, the declaration must silence all but the most determined oppositionists in this country. How far this expectation would have been realised you may estimate by Mr. Fox's language when Mr. Pitt, at my instance, did make the declaration last winter (1799). "If," he said, "the Right Honourable Gentleman had made the declaration now delivered, to France, as well as to Russia, Austria, and Prussia, I should have nothing more to say or to desire."

Experience and reflection confirmed these original impressions. After the war had continued for a year, 'Mr. Wilberforce was engaged in making up his mind cautiously and maturely, and, therefore, slowly, as to the best conduct to be observed by Great Britain in the present critical emergency.' With what a severe self-examination he was accustomed to conduct these inquiries, may be learnt from an entry made at that period in his private journal. 'It is a proof to me of my secret ambition, that though I foresee how much I shall suffer in my feelings throughout from differing from Pitt, and how indifferent a figure I shall most likely make, yet that motives of ambition will insinuate themselves. Give me, O Lord, a true sense of the comparative value of earthly and of heavenly things; this will render me sober-minded, and fix my affections on things above.'

Such was the solemn preparation with which he approached this momentous question, and moved in the session of 1794 an amendment to the address, recommending a more pacific policy. The failure of that attempt did not shake his purpose; for after the interval of a few days he voted with Mr. Grey on a direct motion for the re-establishment of peace. The genuine self-denial with which this submission to a clear sense of duty was attended, Mr. Wilberforce has thus touchingly described. 'No one who has not seen a good deal of public life, and felt how difficult and painful it is to differ widely from those with whom you wish to agree, can judge at what an expense of feeling such duties are performed. Wednesday, February 4, dined at Lord Camden's. Pepper, and Lady Arden, Steele, &c. I felt queer, and all day out of spirits — wrong! but hurt by the idea of Pitt's alienation. — 12th, party of the *old firm* at the Speaker's; I not there.'

Mr. Pitt's alienation was not the only, nor the most severe penalty which Mr. Wilberforce had to pay on this occasion. The sarcasms of Windham, — the ironical compliments of Burke, — a cold reception from the King, — and even Fox's congratulation upon his approaching alliance with the Opposition, might have been endured. But it was more hard to bear the rebukes, however tenderly con-

veyed, of his friend and early guide, the Dean of Carlisle; the reproaches of the whole body of his clerical allies for the countenance which they conceived him to have given to the enemies of religion and of order; and the earnest remonstrances of many of his most powerful supporters in Yorkshire. The temper so accessible to all kindly influences was, however, sustained by the invigorating voice of an approving conscience. He resumed his pacific proposals in the spring of 1795, and though still defeated, it was by a decreasing majority. Before the close of that year, Mr. Pitt himself had become a convert to the opinions of his friend. The war had ceased to be popular, and Lord Malmesbury's negotiation followed. The failure of that attempt at length convinced Mr. Wilberforce that the war was inevitable; and thenceforward his opposition to it ceased. Yet, on the renewal of hostilities in 1803, he joined Mr. Fox in opposing the ministry, not merely with his vote, but with a speech, which he subsequently published.

The impeachment of Lord Melville brought Mr. Wilberforce into a direct and painful hostility to those with whom he had lived in youthful intimacy, and who still retained their hold on his heart. Mr. Pitt was still his chosen friend; Lord Melville had been his early companion. But though compelled to watch the movements of the 'fascinating eye' and 'the agitated countenance' turned reproachfully to him from the Treasury Bench, he delivered, on this occasion, one of the most memorable of his Parliamentary speeches,—in which the sternest principles of public morality were so touchingly combined with compassion for the errors he condemned, that the effect was irresistible; and the casting vote of the Speaker can scarcely be said with greater truth to have determined the decision of the House. Nothing more truly in the spirit of the pure and lofty principles by which he was guided, is recorded of him, than his defence to the charge of inconsistency for declining to join the deputation which carried up to the King the subsequent address for the removal of Lord Melville from the Royal Councils. 'I am a little surprised,' he said, 'that it should be imputed as a fault to any that they did not accompany the procession to St. James's. I should have thought that men's own feelings might have suggested to them that it was a case in which the heart might be permitted to give a lesson to the judgment. My country might justly demand that, in my decision on Lord Melville's conduct, I should be governed by the rules of justice, and the principles of the constitution, without suffering party considerations, personal friendship, or any extrinsic motive whatever to interfere; that, in all that was substantial, I should deem myself

as in the exercise of a judicial office. But when the sentence of the law is past, is not that sufficient? Am I to join in the execution of it? Is it to be expected of me that I am to stifle the natural feelings of the heart, and not even to shed a tear over the very sentence I am pronouncing? I know not what Spartan virtue or stoical pride might require; but I know that I am taught a different, ay, and a better lesson by a greater than either Lysurgus or Zeno. Christianity enforces no such sacrifice. She requires us indeed to do justice, but to love mercy. I learn in her school not to triumph even over a conquered enemy, and must I join the triumph over a fallen friend?’

Although the Historian of the reign of George III. will probably notice Mr. Wilberforce chiefly or exclusively as the author of two great Parliamentary measures, the Annalist of the same times will assign to him a place in almost every memorable debate of the House of Commons, during the last forty years of that reign, and during the first five years of the reign which followed it. But these occurrences, so numerous and so disconnected, will hardly be manageable as a whole, or capable of exhibition, as so many sequences, even in the hands of a Biographer, unless he shall treat every incident which he shall glean from the debates and journals of the House, as so many indications of the same unvarying convictions, or as examples of a lawgiver continually acting in the spirit of a judge — seeking no guide but truth — refusing implicit obedience to the voice of any commander — derided by the whole body of partisans as irresolute, fluctuating, and unstable, — and yet being almost the only member of the Legislature whose conscience was perfectly clear of that reproach. From the commencement to the close of his public service, he, and perhaps he alone, shaped his course with an eye continually fixed on what he believed to be the real welfare of his country, with which no personal and no party interest was ever permitted to interfere.

Thus, in the tranquillity of the years 1785 and 1786, during the alarms of 1809, and amidst the disaffection of 1822, Mr. Wilberforce was alike a Parliamentary Reformer, and always with equal decision. For at all times, and under each new aspect of affairs, he acknowledged the duty of wrestling, at whatever hazard, with the great moral evils inseparable from the purchase and sale of seats in the Legislature.

He was the zealous defender of the Toleration Act, against Mr. Pitt and Bishop Pretyman in 1800, and against Lord Sidmouth in 1811. For he judged that the real interests of Christianity required that all men should be free to diffuse their genuine religious opinions. But he was the equally zealous antagonist of the Maynooth Grant

in 1807 and 1808, because he thought that the same interests forbade the intervention of the state itself to propagate doctrines condemned by our ecclesiastical and civil polity as deadly errors, and to maintain practices censured by the same polity as nothing less than idolatrous.

In the perilous times of 1797 and 1800, and in the times of supposed peril of 1817 and 1819, he defended the bills suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, and in 1806 he opposed the admission into the Cabinet of the Chief Justice of the King's Bench. For he habitually regarded himself as the depository of the sacred trust of transmitting our great national institutions unimpaired to future times, whether they were assailed by democratic violence, or by the personal predilections or the party spirit of the minister of the day.

His zeal for public morality stimulated him not only to zealous efforts for diminishing the number of oaths, for the abolition of lotteries, and for rescuing the day of rest from profanation, but to an effort, far more opposed to his natural temper, to bring Warren Hastings to the punishment which, under the shelter of the relaxed and conventional morality of his judges, he ultimately escaped.

Yet Mr. Wilberforce was not to be drawn into the support or the rejection of any measure by arguments, however plausible or popular, which he considered to be erroneously deduced from the great laws of public morality; and therefore, at the expense of appearing to the multitude to abandon the standard under which he had so often rallied them, he refused to condemn the seizure of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen. Yet the same fixed resolve to obey his own conscience at whatever immediate pain, induced him to condemn, even with sternness, the ill-fated expedition to Walcheren, although it had brought overwhelming ridicule on the second Earl of Chatham, the brother of the most intimate of his early friends.

And this lofty determination, fearlessly to pursue the right into whatever consequences it might conduct him, supplied him, as it not rarely happens, with much political truth, to which others more tardily and imperfectly attained by a merely intellectual process. This kind of intuitive wisdom made him a free trader in 1787 on the debate of the French and Portuguese commercial treaties—a bank restrictionist ten years later—the triumphant antagonist, in 1806, of a tax on iron, the raw material of one of our great staple trades—and in 1816, the opponent of the Income Tax, which was preventing those accumulations of capital on which the prosperity of all trades depends.

Ridicule, though distinctly foreseen and keenly apprehended,



could not deter him from supporting an address to King George III. to use his influence for the delivery of Lafayette from his prison at Olmutz. Nor could his loyal attachment to that sovereign (who lived in his family so wisely, and governed his kingdom so disastrously) induce him to acquiesce in the grants to the Princes of the Royal House, or to oppose them silently, though, as we learn, Mr. Pitt was 'furious' on the occasion. While others were regarding the Australian continent only as a vast receptacle for convicts, his Parliamentary influence was used for laying there the foundations of the Church which now occupies every inhabited district of New South Wales. While others were diverting the whole current of national expenditure to the support of the war, he was labouring, in the House of Commons, to obtain for the Church of England that increased assistance by which alone, as he believed, an effectual barrier could be raised amongst us against ignorance and vice, disaffection and anarchy.

It is difficult to reconcile the great contemporary influence, with the small posthumous celebrity, of so many of the eminent actors on the theatre of the world. It is often difficult to detect, or even to conjecture, what was the real secret of an authority long since expended, and which no extant record renders intelligible. In many of such cases it will be found that the power possessed by a man in his own generation depended much more than we willingly believe, on his having possessed, in his bodily organism, a meet interpreter for the movements of his soul. He may be great who addresses mankind by the pen, the pencil, or the chisel, if Minerva alone be propitious to him. But half Olympus must favour him who would rise to eminence by arts which bring him into daily intercourse with his fellow-men. Every hero of history has been a sort of Roscius in his way; as Louis XIV. became a kind of hero, merely because he excelled all mankind in the rôle of the Grand Monarque. Half the Parliamentary reputation of our own times rests on no higher ground. We therefore derogate nothing from Mr. Wilberforce in ascribing much of his influence in the House of Commons to his unrivalled dramatic powers. The student of the history of those times, who shall read some of the discourses which won for him so high a reputation, will scarcely avoid the belief that it was very ill merited. But if he had *heard* them fall from the lips of the speaker — if he had *seen* him rising with a spirit and self-reliance which Mercutio might have envied, and had listened to those tones so full, liquid, and penetrating, and had watched the eye sparkling as each playful fancy crossed his field of vision, or glowing when he spoke of the oppressions done upon the earth — the fragile form elevating and expanding itself into heroic dignity

—and the transitions of his gestures, so rapid and so complete, each successive attitude adapting itself so easily to each new variation of his style—he would no more have wondered at the efficacy even of ordinary topics and of common-place remarks from such a speaker, than at the magic of the tamest speech from the lips of Garrick or of Talma.

And yet it was neither in his Parliamentary life nor in the mixed intercourse of society, nor in the throng of his almoners, nor amidst the crowds with whom he was accustomed to interchange the sympathies of great charitable meetings, that the range and force of his power over the hearts of his associates was most effectually displayed. The most potent incantations of this great magician were raised within the sacred circle of his home. There his wife, the daughter of Isaac Spooner, a country gentleman in Warwickshire, and their four sons (destined, afterwards, to become conspicuous members of society), and their two daughters, and his only sister and her husband, formed the interior of the many circles of which he was the common centre. It was incomparably the dearest; yet he loved much the second group, composed, as it was, of his more remote kindred, and of the chosen friends of his youth; and much he delighted in the third, thronged as it continually was, by the associates of his labours for the commonwealth and for the Church; and much also it rejoiced him to regale, with hospitable cheer, and kind or gay discourse, the remoter multitude who, from Gades to Ganges, sought admittance at his house, some to gratify their curiosity, some to explain every grievance suffered beneath the sun, and some to solicit countenance for schemes of beneficence, more numerous and more varied than ever were conceived in Laputa, or accomplished in the New Atlantis.

But in proportion to the shortness of the radii was the warmth and brightness at the circumference. With his wife and children about him, the aged William Wilberforce became once more a child, and seemed for the moment scarcely older than his boys. Their glad voices found in his a no less joyous echo, or, rising spontaneously to the level of their mirth, his spirits would appear as unbroken as their own. Nor were kind filial artifices wanting to lure the old man to the sheltered walk where he liked best to stroll, and there to guide him to those recollections on which he dwelt with the fondest delight, and the most abounding affluence of anecdote and of reflection. From such topics the transition was easy, and indeed inevitable, to the thoughts which had settled down into the lowest depths of his soul, but which he never poured out in so full a current, or illustrated with such fertility as when his sons had gathered round him. Then he would speak as if touch-

ing the lyre of David, of all the relations between the divine nature and the human, and would find in every incident of his past life, in whatever he had observed of the lives of others, in each passage of Holy Writ, and every well-remembered poem, in the whole world, visible or audible, buttresses and ornaments for the two main pillars of his creed—the first, that God is love; the second, that God is truth.

Whoever had wished to find fault with the social habits and demeanour of Mr. Wilberforce, would have complained of his too rapid movement and versatility of mind, which left no room for repose, and for that deliberate interchange of intelligence and opinion, to which repose is indispensable. But this excitement and hurry of spirit was subdued, in the society of his wife and children, by the jealous tenderness which deprecated the association, in their minds, with the idea of himself, of any other than laudable, and reverent, and affectionate remembrances. Even in their boyhood he listened to his sons with a staid and sober quietness, foreign to his ordinary manners; and in their manhood invited their information, courted their advice, and deferred to their judgment with the same kindly confidence with which he stayed his feeble steps by leaning on their more vigorous arms.

Friendship never assumed a more touching form. His paternal tenderness had not, even in their early years, degenerated into fondness, or expressed itself by caresses, or by a blind and partial admiration. On the contrary, it was with an almost morbid acuteness that he detected the germs of evil, moral or intellectual, in his children, and watched the growth, or the decline, of any wayward humour or dangerous propensity in them. When, however, the anxious days of their education were completed, then, if ever, might be traced on his venerable countenance one flush of human pride, as he would exclaim, ‘I have had three sons at Oxford, and all of them first-class men. Show me the man who can make the same boast!’ As years rolled on, and he saw two of those sons presbyters of the Church of England, and the third self-devoted to the same high office, there was no longer room in his heart for any emotion less profound than that of adoring gratitude, that his habitual prayer for them had been heard. If they had brought home royal patents placing them among the chief nobles of the realm, he would have regarded them as mean and worthless honours, compared with that which their ordination to that sacred function had conferred upon his house.

And who that ever witnessed can ever forget the solemn and delighted complacency with which he took his seat among the congregation to which either of his sons was to minister—the child-

like docility with which he listened to the voice of his child—how he rejoiced to gather, for his own spiritual nutriment, the ripe harvest of the seeds which, in earlier days, he had himself sown in their minds—with what a grave and tender joy he partook of the domestic devotions which they had learnt from himself to offer—and in what tones of almost oppressive gratitude to God, he would speak of the delight of accompanying one of them in his pastoral visits, and of joining in the prayers which his young messenger of the Gospel of Peace had there poured forth by the beds of his sick or dying parishioners.

Many years have since passed over those who, at that time gazed upon that aged father, so joyous and so placid, his fading eye and furrowed cheek reflecting the dawn of the eternal day then about to rise upon him, his work on earth accomplished, and his earthly hopes fulfilled, blessing his children, and blessed by them; and although those years have brought with them such events as to render dim and obscure almost every other retrospect, the imperishable image of that old man—contemplating, so serenely, from the narrow isthmus of life, the world he had loved and served so long, and the world for which he had been so long maturing—still possesses their memories in unimpaired distinctness; attesting to them that even the Valley of the Shadow of Death may smile like the green pastures, and be tranquil as the waters of comfort, to one who descends into it, sustained by the staff, and defended by the rod, of the Good Shepherd whose guidance he has followed all his journey through.

The kind Providence which thus conducted him withdrew him from the conflicts of public life before he had lost the strength without which retirement can neither be really enjoyed nor fitly improved. In the year 1825 he quitted Parliament to pass the rest of his days in the bosom of his family. There, however, he did not entirely escape those sorrows which usually gather round us as the shadows grow long. He had to weep by the dying beds of each of his two daughters; and from that want of worldly wisdom which always characterised him, he lost a considerable part of his fortune in a speculation from which he had nothing to gain or to hope but the gratification of parental kindness.

Never were such misfortunes more effectually baffled by the invulnerable peace of a cheerful and self-approving heart. There were not, indeed, wanting external circumstances of a painful character which marked his comparative poverty, but the most close and intimate observer could never perceive in his countenance or in his demeanour so much as a passing shade of dejection or anxiety on that account. He might, indeed, have been supposed



to be unconscious that he had lost anything, but for the remarks which occasionally fell from him on the divine goodness which had converted the seeming calamity into a blessing to his children and to himself.

Two of them had by this time become incumbents of parsonages, — of which one stood on the pleasant hills which skirt the Medway, and the other on the slope which connects the high downs of the Isle of Wight with the adjacent ocean. In his altered fortunes he found a welcome apology for withdrawing from society at large to gladden by his almost constant presence those quiet homes of the sons by whom his biography has since been written. There, surrounded by his wife, his children, and his grandchildren, he yielded himself to the current of each successive desire; for he had now acquired that rare maturity of the moral stature, in which the conflict between inclination and duty is over, and virtue and self-indulgence are the same.

As his later years wore away, some decline of his intellectual powers was occasionally perceptible to the friends of his earlier and more active days. But in general it was otherwise; and after an evening saunter with him on the sands which stretch towards the Needles, or beneath the holly hedges which skirt the hop-gardens in the northern district of Kent, it was difficult not to recall and (silently at least) to apply to him the apostrophe of Cowley to the aged author of the ‘*Leviathan*’:—

‘Nor can the snows which now cold age hath shed  
Upon thy reverend head,  
Quench or allay the noble fires within :  
For all that thou hast been, and all that youth can be,  
Thou’rt yet—so fully still dost thou  
Possess the manhood and the bloom of wit.  
To things immortal time can do no wrong,  
And that which never is to die, for ever must be young.’

The end of his pilgrimage was now drawing near, and gradual, gentle, and serene was his descent to the dark waters through which all must pass to the unseen and unimaginable regions which lie beyond. The heavenly guide who had thus far conducted him did not desert him now. Looking back with gratitude—sometimes eloquent, and sometimes striving in vain for utterance—to his long career of usefulness, of honour, and of enjoyment, he watched, with grave composure, the ebb of the current which was fast bearing him to his eternal reward. After a very brief illness, and with no indication of bodily suffering, he died in his seventy-fifth year, in undisturbed tranquillity, — breathing out to all who surrounded him in his latest hours, benedictions full of love, and thoughts

dictated by heavenly wisdom, not without the irradiation of one, at least, of those bright gleams of gaiety which, in his happy nature, no shadow was ever deep enough entirely to obscure.

He was laid in the grave in Westminster Abbey, in the presence of a large number of the members of both Houses of Parliament, and with all the solemnities which their zeal could devise to express their sense of the services, the dignity, and the worth of the colleague they deplored. Never had the solemn ritual of the Church been pronounced over the grave of any of her children with more affecting or more appropriate truth. Never were recited on a more fitting occasion the solemn words, 'I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me—Write. From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Even so, saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours.'

The book\* to which (not unaided by other sources of knowledge) we are chiefly indebted for the materials of this rapid survey of the life and character of Mr. Wilberforce, contains some incidental notices of the eminent persons with whom he associated. The contribution thus made to the biographical history of that time is less extensive than might have been anticipated; and, indeed, less interesting, except as it throws some light on the private life of Mr. Pitt, of whose personal habits the world at large has scarcely any intelligence. In these volumes a glimpse of him is caught at one time as he passes an evening in classical studies or amusements with Mr. Canning, and at another as, with the aid of Mr. Wilberforce and Lord Grenville, he cuts a walk through his plantations at Holwood. On the whole, however, the William Pitt of this work is the austere Minister with whom we were already so well acquainted, not the man himself, in his natural, or in his emancipated state.

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Wilberforce is almost the only passage which gives us an intimation of the careless familiarity in which, for many years, they lived together:—

'And now, after having transacted my business with the Minister, a word or two to the man—a character in which, if it is more pleasant to you, it is no less pleasant to me to address you. I wish you may be passing your time half as salubriously and comfortably as I am at Gisborne's, where I am breathing good air, eating good mutton, keeping good hours, and enjoying the company of good friends. You have only two of the four at command, nor

\* The Life of William Wilberforce, by his sons, Robert Isaac Wilberforce, M.A., and Samuel Wilberforce, M.A. In five volumes. London, 1838. Murray.

these always in so pure a state as in Needwood Forest; your town mutton being apt to be woolly, and your town friends to be interested: however, I sincerely believe you are, through the goodness of Providence, better off in the latter particular than has been the fate of ninety-nine Ministers out of a hundred; and as for the former, the quantity you lay in may in some degree atone for the quality; and it is a sign that neither in friends nor mutton you have yet lost your taste. Indeed, I shall reckon it a bad symptom of your moral or corporeal state, as the case may be, when your palate is so vitiated, that you cannot distinguish the true from the false flavour. All this is sad stuff, but you must allow us gentlemen who live in forests to be a little figurative. I will only add, however (that I may not quite exhaust your patience), that I hope you will never cease to relish me, and do me the justice to believe the ingredients are good, though you may not altogether approve of the cooking. Yours ever,

‘W. WILBERFORCE.

‘P.S.—Remember me to all friends. I hope you have no more gout, &c. If you will at any time give me a line (though it be but a mouthful) I shall be glad of it. You will think me be-Burked like yourself.’

On the occasion of Mr. Pitt’s duel with Mr. Tierney, Mr. Wilberforce had designed to bring the subject under the notice of the House of Commons. The intention was defeated by the following kind and characteristic letter:—

‘My dear Wilberforce,

‘I am not the person to argue with you on a subject in which I am a good deal concerned. I hope, too, that I am incapable of doubting your kindness to me (however mistaken I may think it), if you let any sentiment of that sort actuate you on the present occasion. I must suppose that some such feeling has inadvertently operated upon you, because, whatever may be your general sentiments on subjects of this nature, they can have acquired no new tone or additional argument from anything that has passed in this transaction. You must be supposed to bring this forward in reference to the individual case.

‘In doing so, you will be accessory in loading one of the parties with unfair and unmerited obloquy. With respect to the other party, myself, I feel it a real duty to say to you frankly that your motion is one for my removal. If any step on the subject is proposed in Parliament and agreed to, I shall feel from that moment that I can be of more use out of office than in it; for in it, accord-

ing to the feelings I entertain, I could be of none. I state to you, as I think I ought, distinctly and explicitly, what I feel. I hope I need not repeat what I always feel personally to yourself.— Yours ever,

‘WILLIAM PITT.

‘Downing Street, Wednesday,  
‘May 30, 1798, 11 P.M.’

The following passage is worth transcribing as a graphic, though slight sketch of Mr. Pitt, from the pen of one who knew him so well:—

‘When a statement had been made to the House of the cruel practices, approaching certainly to torture, by which the discovery of concealed arms had been enforced in Ireland, John Claudius Beresford rose to reply, and said with a force and honesty, the impression of which I never can forget, “I fear, and feel deep shame in making the avowal—I fear it is too true—I defend it not—but I trust I may be permitted to refer, as some palliation of these atrocities, to the state of my unhappy country, where rebellion and its attendant horrors had roused on both sides to the highest pitch all the strongest passions of our nature.” I was with Pitt in the House of Lords when Lord Clare replied to a similar charge—“Well, suppose it were so; but surely,” &c. I shall never forget Pitt’s look. He turned round to me with that indignant stare which sometimes marked his countenance, and stalked out of the House.’

It is not generally known that, at the period of Lord Melville’s trial, a coolness almost approaching to estrangement had arisen between that Minister and Mr. Pitt. The following extract from one of Mr. Wilberforce’s Diaries on this subject affords an authentic and curious illustration of Mr. Pitt’s character:—

‘I had perceived above a year before that Lord Melville had not the power over Pitt’s mind which he once possessed. Pitt was taking me to Lord Camden’s, and in our *tête-à-tête* he gave me an account of the negotiations which had been on foot to induce him to enter Addington’s Administration. When they quitted office in 1801, Dundas proposed taking as his motto, *Jam rude donatus*. Pitt suggested to him that, having always been an active man, he would probably wish again to come into office, and then that his having taken such a motto would be made a ground for ridicule. Dundas assented, and took another motto. Addington had not long been



in office, before Pitt's expectation was fulfilled, and Dundas undertook to bring Pitt into the plan; which was to appoint some third person head, and bring in Pitt and Addington on equal terms under him. Dundas accordingly, confiding in his knowledge of all Pitt's ways and feelings, set out for Walmer Castle; and after dinner, and port wine, began cautiously to open his proposals. But he saw it would not do, and stopped abruptly. "Really," said Pitt, with a sly severity, and it was almost the only sharp thing I ever heard him say of any friend, "I had not the curiosity to ask what I was to be."

Amongst the letters addressed to Mr. Wilberforce, to be found in these volumes, is one written by John Wesley from his death-bed, on the day before he sank into the lethargy from which he was never roused. They are probably the last written words of that extraordinary man:—

‘February 24, 1791.

‘My dear Sir,

‘Unless Divine power has raised you up to be as *Athanasius contra mundum*, I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing that execrable villany which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils: but if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them together stronger than God? Oh! be not weary of well doing. Go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it. That he who has guided you from your youth up, may continue to strengthen you in this and all things, is the prayer of, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

‘JOHN WESLEY.’

From a very different correspondent, Jeremy Bentham, Mr. Wilberforce received two notes, for which, as they are the only examples we have seen in print of his epistolary style, we must find a place:—

‘Kind Sir,

‘The next time you happen on Mr. Attorney-General, in the House or elsewhere, be pleased to take a spike—the longer and sharper the better—and apply it to him, by way of *memento*, that the Penitentiary Contract Bill has, for I know not what length of time, been sticking in his hands; and you will much oblige your humble servant to command,

‘JEREMY BENTHAM.

‘N.B. — A corking-pin was, yesterday, applied by Mr. Abbot.’

‘I sympathise with your now happily promising exertions in behalf of the race of innocents, whose lot it has hitherto been to be made the subject-matter of depredation, for the purpose of being treated worse than the authors of such crimes are treated for those crimes in other places.’

There are, in this work, some occasional additions to the stock of political anecdotes. Of these we transcribe the following specimens:—

‘Franklin signed the Peace of Paris in his old spotted velvet coat (it being the time of a court-mourning, which rendered it more particular). “What,” said my friend the negotiator, “is the meaning of that harlequin coat?”—“It is that in which he was abused by Wedderburne.” He showed much rancour and personal enmity to this country—would not grant the common passports for trade, which were, however, easily got from Jay or Adams.

‘Dined with Lord Camden; he very chatty and pleasant. Abused Thurlow for his duplicity and mystery. Said the King had said to him occasionally he had wished Thurlow and Pitt to agree; for that both were necessary to him—one in the Lords, the other in the Commons. Thurlow will never do anything to oblige Lord Camden, because he is a friend of Pitt’s. Lord Camden himself, though he speaks of Pitt with evident affection, seems rather to complain of his being too much under the influence of any one who is about him; particularly of Dundas, who prefers his countrymen whenever he can. Lord Camden is sure that Lord Bute got money by the Peace of Paris. He can account for his sinking near 300,000*l.* in land and houses; and his paternal estate in the island which bears his name, was not above 1500*l.* a year, and he is a life-tenant only of Wortley, which may be 8000*l.* or 10,000*l.* Lord Camden does not believe Lord Bute has any the least connection with the King now, whatever he may have had. Lord Thurlow is giving constant dinners to the Judges, to gain them over to his party. \* \* \* \* \* was applied to by \* \* \* \* \*, a wretched sort of dependant of the Prince of Wales, to know if he would lend money on the joint bond of the Prince and the Dukes of York and Clarence, to receive double the sum lent, whenever the King should die, and either the Prince of Wales, the Dukes of York and Clarence, come into the inheritance. The sum intended to be raised is 200,000*l.*

‘Tis only a hollow truce, not a peace, that is made between Thurlow and Pitt. They can have no confidence in each other.’

Boswell, the prince of biographers, has well nigh ruined the art

of biography. For like every other art, it has its laws, or rather is bound by those laws to which all composition is subject, whether the pen or the pencil, the chisel or the musical chords, be the instrument with which we work. Of those canons, the chief is, that the artist must aim at unity of effect, and must therefore bring all the subordinate parts of his design into a tributary dependence on his principal object. Boswell (a man of true genius, however coarse his feelings, and however flagrant his self-conceit), knew how to extract from every incident of his hero's life, and from the meanest alike and the noblest of his hero's associates, a series of ever-varying illustrations and embellishments of his hero's character. The imagination of Cervantes scarcely produced a portrait more single, harmonious, and prominent, in the centre of innumerable sketches, and of groups which fill without crowding the canvass.

The imitators of this great master have aspired to the same success by the simple collocation of all facts, all letters, and all sayings, from which the moral, intellectual, or social nature of the main figure on their biographical easel may be inferred. But in order to truth of effect, a narrator must suppress much of the whole truth. Charles V. of Spain, and Charles I. of England, still live in picture, as they lived in the flesh, because Titian and Vandyke knew how to exclude, to conceal, and to diminish, as well as how to copy. Imagination cannot do her work unless she be free in the choice of her materials; and if the work of imagination be undone, nothing is done which any distant times will hoard as a part of their literary inheritance.

Mr. Wilberforce was an admirable subject for the exercise of the dramatic power which converts a whole generation into a mirror, reflecting all the different attitudes, and glowing with all the shift-colours, of some one conspicuous and commanding form. A filial hand could not, without some impropriety, have used, if it had possessed, that power; and the time is perhaps too recent for any one to hazard such a performance. These volumes must therefore be considered as *mémoires pour servir*, in the composition of an historical picture of English society, political and religious, as it existed in the most eventful epoch of the history of England, and as it clustered round one of its most admirable members. Whoever shall undertake that task, will find here guides to whom it is impossible to deny the praise of fidelity and diligence, and unaffected modesty. Studiously withdrawing themselves from the notice of their readers, they have made no display of their own theological, scientific, and literary wealth. Their work has been executed with ability, and with deep affection. If their father does not live in

their pages as Madame de Stael described him—the most eloquent and the wittiest converser she had met in England—nor as tradition commemorates him—the ever bright and animating centre of the social system which gravitated round him—he is yet luminously exhibited in his still nobler character, as consuming his existence in labours for the Church, for the State, and for mankind, such as no other man in that age, and such as no private man in any age of his country's annals, had at once the genius and the will to render.

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## THE CLAPHAM SECT.

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IN one of those collections of Essays which have recently been detached from the main body of the Edinburgh Review (the writers of that Journal following therein the policy of Constantine and of Charlemagne, when dividing their otherwise too extensive Empires into distinct though associated sovereignties), there occur certain pleasant allusions, already rendered obscure by the lapse of time, to a religious sect or society, which, as it appears, was flourishing in this realm in the reign of George III. What subtle theories, what clouds of learned dust, might have been raised by future Bingham, and by Du Pins yet unborn, to determine what was *The Patent Christianity*, and what *The Clapham Sect* of the nineteenth century, had not a fair and a noble author appeared to dispel, or at least to mitigate, the darkness! Something, indeed, had been done aforetime. The antiquities of Clapham, had they not been written in the *Britannia* of Mr. Lysons? Her beauties, had they not inspired the muse of Mr. Robins? But it was reserved for Mrs. Milner, in her life of Dean Milner, and for Lord Teignmouth, in his Life of his Father, to throw such light on her social and ecclesiastical state as will render the facetious Journalist\* intelligible to future generations. Treading in their steps, and aided by their information, it shall be our endeavour to clear up still more fully, for the benefit of ages yet to come, this passage in the ecclesiastical history of the age which has just passed away.

Though living amidst the throes of Empires, and the fall of Dynasties, men are not merely warriors and politicians. Even in such times they buy and sell, build and plant, marry, and are given in marriage. And thus it happened, that during the war with revolutionary France, Henry Thornton, the then representative in

\* The Rev. Sydney Smith.

Parliament of the borough of Southwark, having become a husband, became also the owner of a spacious mansion on the confines of the villa-cinctured common of Clapham.

It is difficult to consider the suburban retirement of a wealthy banker æsthetically (as the Germans have it); but, in this instance, the intervention of William Pitt imparted some dignity to an occurrence otherwise so unpoetical. He dismissed for a moment his budgets and his subsidies, for the amusement of planning an oval saloon, to be added to this newly purchased residence. It arose at his bidding, and yet remains, perhaps, a solitary monument of the architectural skill of that imperial mind. Lofty and symmetrical, it was curiously wainscoted with books on every side, except where it opened on a far extended lawn, reposing beneath the giant arms of aged elms and massive tulip-trees.

Few of the designs of the great Minister were equally successful. Ere many years had elapsed, the chamber he had thus projected became the scene of enjoyments which, amidst his proudest triumphs, he might well have envied, and witnessed the growth of projects more majestic than any which ever engaged the deliberations of his Cabinet. For there, at the close of each succeeding day, drew together a group of playful children, and with them a knot of legislators, rehearsing, in sport or earnestly, some approaching debate; or travellers from distant lands; or circumnavigators of the worlds of literature and science; or the Pastor of the neighbouring Church, whose look announced him as the channel through which benedictions passed to earth from heaven; and, not seldom, a youth who listened, while he seemed to read the book spread out before him. There also was still a matronly presence, controlling, animating, and harmonising the elements of this little world, by a kindly spell, of which none could trace the working, though the charm was confessed by all. Dissolved in endless discourse, or rather in audible soliloquy, flowing from springs deep and inexhaustible, the lord of this well-peopled enclosure rejoiced over it with a contagious joy. In a few paces, indeed, he might traverse the whole extent of that patriarchal dominion. But within those narrow precincts were his Porch, his Studio, his Judgment-Seat, his Oratory, and 'the Church that was in his house,'—the reduced, but not imperfect resemblance of that innumerable Company which his Catholic spirit embraced and loved, under all the varying forms which conceal their union from each other and from the world. Discord never agitated that tranquil home; lassitude never brooded over it. Those demons quailed at the aspect of a man in whose heart peace had found a resting-place, though his intellect was incapable of repose.

Henry was the third son of John Thornton, a merchant, renowned in his generation for a munificence more than princely, and commended to the reverence of posterity by the letters and the poetry of Cowper. The father was one of those rare men in whom the desire to relieve distress assumes the form of a master passion; and, if faith be due to tradition, he indulged it with a disdain, alternately ludicrous and sublime, of the good advice which the eccentric have to undergo from the judicious. Conscious of no aims but such as might invite the scrutiny of God and man, he pursued them after his own fearless fashion — yielding to every honest impulse, relishing a frolic when it fell in his way, choosing his associates in scorn of mere worldly precepts, and worshipping with any fellow Christian whose heart beat in unison with his own, however inharmonious might be some of the articles of their respective creeds.

His son was the heir of his benevolence, but not of his peculiarities. If Lavater had been summoned to divine the occupation of Henry Thornton, he would probably have assigned to him the highest rank among the Judges of his native land. Brows capacious and serene, a scrutinising eye, and lips slightly separated, as of one who listens and prepares to speak, were the true interpreters of the informing mind within. It was a countenance on which were graven the traces of an industry alike quiet and persevering, of a self-possession unassailable by any strong excitement, and of an understanding keen to detect and comprehensive to reconcile distinctions. The judicial, like the poetical nature, is a birthright; and by that imprescriptible title he possessed it. Forensic debates were indeed beyond his province; but even in Westminster Hall, the noblest of her temples, Themis had no more devoted worshipper. To investigate the great controversies of his own and of all former times, was the chosen employment: to pronounce sentence in them, the dear delight of his leisure hours.

Nothing which fell within the range of his observation escaped this curious inquiry. His own duties, motives, and habits, the characters of those whom he loved best, the intellectual resources and powers of his various friends and companions, the prepossessions, hereditary or conventional, to which he or they were subject, the maxims of society, the dogmas of the Church, the problems which were engaging the attention of Parliament or of political economists, and those which affected his own commercial enterprises—all passed in review before him, and were all in their turn adjudicated with the grave impartiality which the Keeper of the Great Seal is expected to exhibit. Truth, the foe of falsehood — truth, the antagonist of error—and truth, the exorcist of ambiguity

—was the object of his supreme homage; and so reverential were the vows offered by him at her shrine, that he abjured the communion of those less devout worshippers, who throw over her the veil of fiction, or place her in epigrammatic attitudes, or disguise her beneath the mask of wit or drollery. To contemplate truth in the purest light, and in her own fair proportions, he was content that she should be unadorned by any beauties but such as belong to her celestial nature, and are inseparable from it. Hence his disquisitions did not always escape the reproach of drought and tediousness, or avoided it only by the cheerful tone and pungent sense with which they were conducted. He had as little pretension to the colloquial eloquence as to the multifarious learning and transcendental revelations of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Yet the pilgrimages to Clapham and to Highgate were made with rival zeal, and the relics brought back from each were regarded as of almost equal sanctity. If the philosophical poet dismissed his audience under the spell of theories compassing all knowledge, and of imagery peopling all space, the practical philosopher sent his hearers to their homes instructed in a doctrine cheerful, genial, and active—a doctrine which taught them to be sociable and busy, to augment to the utmost of their power the joint stock of human happiness, and freely to take and freely to enjoy the share assigned to each by the conditions of that universal partnership. And well did the teacher illustrate his own maxims. The law of social duty, as interpreted in his domestic academy, was never expounded more clearly or more impressively than by his habitual example.

Having inherited an estate, which, though not splendid, was enough for the support of his commercial credit, he adjudged that it ought never to be increased by accumulation, nor diminished by sumptuousness; and he lived and died in the rigid practice of this decision. In the division of his income between himself and the poor, the share he originally assigned to them was nearly six-sevenths of the whole; and, as appeared after his death, from accounts kept with the most minute commercial accuracy, the amount expended by him in one of his earlier years, for the relief of distress, considerably exceeded nine thousand pounds. When he had become the head of a family, he reviewed this decree, and thenceforward regarded himself as trustee for the miserable, to the extent only of one-third of his whole expenditure. The same faithful record showed that the smallest annual payment ever paid by him on this account amounted to two thousand pounds. As a legislator, he had condemned the unequal pressure of the direct taxes on the rich and the poor; but, instead of solacing his defeat with the narcotic of virtuous indignation, combined with discreet parsi-



mony, he silently raised his own contribution to the level of his censure. Tidings of the commercial failure of a near kinsman embarked him at once on an inquiry—how far he was obliged to indemnify those who might have given credit to his relative, in a reliance, however unauthorised, on his own resources; and again the coffers of the banker were unlocked by the astuteness of the casuist. A mercantile partnership (many a year has passed since the disclosure could injure or affect any one), which without his knowledge had obtained from his firm large and improvident advances, became so hopelessly embarrassed, that their bankruptcy was pressed on him as the only chance of averting from his own house the most serious disasters. He overruled the proposal, on the ground that they whose rashness had given to their debtors an unmerited credit, had no right to call on others to divide with them the consequent loss. To the last farthing he therefore discharged the liabilities of the insolvents, at a cost of which his own share exceeded twenty thousand pounds. Yet he was then declining in health, and the father of nine young children. Enamoured of truth, the living spirit of justice, he yielded the allegiance of the heart to justice, the outward form of truth. The law engraven on the tablet of his conscience, and executed by the ministry of his affections, was strictly interpreted by his reason, as the supreme earthly judge. Whatever might be his topic, or whatever his employment, he never laid aside the ermine.

And yet, for more than thirty years, he was a member of the unreformed parliament, representing there that people, so few and singular, who dare to think, and speak, and act for themselves. He never gave one party vote, was never claimed as an adherent by any of the contending factions of his times, and, of course, neither won nor sought the favour of any. An impartial arbiter, whose suffrage was the honourable reward of superior reason, he sat apart and aloft, in a position which, though it provoked a splenetic sarcasm from Burke, commanded the respect even of those whom it rebuked.

To the great Whig doctrines of Peace, Reform, Economy, and Toleration, he lent all the authority of his name, and occasionally the aid of his voice. But he was an infrequent and unimpressive speaker, and sought to influence the measures of his day rather by the use of his pen, than by any participation in his rhetoric. His writings, moral, religious, and political, were voluminous, though destitute of any such mutual dependence as to unite them into one comprehensive system; or of any such graces of execution as to obtain for them permanent acceptance. But in a domestic liturgy composed for the use of his own family, and made public after his

death, he encountered, with as much success as can attend it, the difficulty of finding thoughts and language meet to be addressed by the ephemeral dwellers on the earth to Him who inhabiteth eternity. It is simple, grave, weighty, and reverential; and forms a clear, though a faint and subdued, echo of the voice in which the Deity has revealed his sovereign will to man. That will he habitually studied, adored, and laboured to adopt. Yet his piety was reserved and unobtrusive. Like the life blood throbbing in every pulse and visiting every fibre, it was the latent though perennial source of his mental health and energy.

A peace, perfect and unbroken, seemed to possess him. His tribute of pain and sorrow was paid with a submission so tranquil, as sometimes to assume the appearance of a morbid insensibility. But his affections, unimpaired by lawless indulgence, and constant to their proper objects, were subject to a control to be acquired by no feebler discipline. Ills from without assailed him, not as the gloomy ministers of vengeance, but as the necessary exercise of virtues not otherwise to be called into activity. They came as the salutary lessons of a father, not as the penal inflictions of a judge. Nor did the Father, to whom he so meekly bowed, see fit to lay on him those griefs, under the pressure of which the bravest stagger. He never witnessed the irruption of death into his domestic paradise, nor the rending asunder by sin, the parent of death, of the bonds of love and reverence which united to each other the inmates of that happy home — a home happy in his presence from whose lips no morose, or angry, or impatient word ever fell; on whose brow no cloud of anxiety or discontent was ever seen to rest. Surrounded to his latest hours by those whom it had been his chief delight to bless and to instruct, he bequeathed to them the recollection of a wise, a good, and a happy man; that so, if in future life a wider acquaintance with the world should chill the heart with the scepticism so often engendered by such knowledge, they might be reassured in the belief that human virtue is no vain illusion; but that, nurtured by the dews of heaven, it may expand into fertility and beauty, even in those fat places of the earth which romance disowns, and on which no poet's eye will condescend to rest.

A goodly heritage! yet to have transmitted it (if that were all) would, it must be confessed, be an insufficient title to a place amongst memorable men. Nor, except for what he accomplished as the associate of others, could that claim be reasonably preferred on behalf of Henry Thornton. Apart, and sustained only by his own resources, he would neither have undertaken, nor conceived, the more noble of those benevolent designs to which his life was devoted. Affectionate, but passionless — with a fine and indeed a

fastidious taste, but destitute of all creative imagination — gifted rather with fortitude to endure calamity, than with courage to exult in the struggle with danger — a lover of mankind, but not an enthusiast in the cause of our common humanity — his serene and perspicacious spirit was never haunted by the visions, nor borne away by the resistless impulses, of which heroic natures, and they alone, are conscious. Well qualified to impart to the highest energies of others a wise direction, and inflexible perseverance, he had to borrow from them the glowing temperament which hopes against hope, and is wise in despite of prudence. He had not far or long to seek for such an alliance.

On the bright evening of a day which had run its course some thirty or forty summers ago, the usual group had formed themselves in the library already celebrated. Addressing a nearer circle, might be heard above the unbusy hum the voice of the Prelector, investigating the characteristics of Seneca's morality perhaps; or, not improbably, the seizure of the Danish fleet; or, it might be, the various gradations of sanity as exhibited by Robert Hall or Johanna Southcote; when all pastimes were suspended, and all speculations put to flight, to welcome the approach of what seemed a dramatic procession, emerging from the deep foliage by which the further slopes of the now checkered lawn were overhung. In advance of the rest two noisy urchins were putting to no common test the philanthropy of a tall shaggy dog, their playfellow, and the parental indulgence of the slight figure which followed them. Limbs scarcely stouter than those of Asmodeus, sustaining a torso as unlike as possible to that of Theseus, carried him along with the agility of an antelope, though under the weight of two coat-pockets, protuberant as the bags by which some learned brother of the coif announces and secures his rank as leader of his circuit. Grasping a pocket volume in one hand, he wielded in the other a spud, caught up in his progress through the garden, but instinct at his touch with more significance than a whole museum of horticultural instruments. At one instant, a staff, on which he leant and listened to the projector at his elbow developing his plan for the better copering of ships' bottoms, at the next it became a wand, pointing out to a portly constituent from the Cloth Hall at Leeds some rich effect of the sunset; then a truncheon, beating time to the poetical reminiscences of a gentleman of the Wesleyan persuasion, looking painfully conscious of his best clothes and of his best behaviour; and ere the sacred cadence had reached its close, a cutlass, raised in mimic mutiny against the robust form of William Smith, who, as commodore of this ill-assorted squadron, was endeavouring to convoy them to their destined port. But little availed the

sonorous word of command, or the heart-stirring laugh of the stout member for Norwich, to shape a straight course for the volatile representative of the county of York, now fairly under the canvass of his own bright and joyous fancies. He moved in obedience to some impulse like that which prompts the wheelings of the swallow, or the dodgings of the barbel. But whether he advanced or paused, or revolved, his steps were still measured by the ever-changeable music of his own rich voice ranging over all the chords expressive of mirth and tenderness, of curiosity or surprise, of delight or of indignation. *Eheu, fugaces!* Those elder forms are all now reposing beneath the clods of the valley; those playful boys are Right Reverend and Venerable dignitaries of the Church; and he who then seemed to read while he listened silently, is now in the garrulity of declining years, telling old tales, and perhaps distorting in the attempt to revive them, pictures which have long since been fading from the memory. But for that misgiving, how easy to depict the nearer approach of William Wilberforce, and of the tail by which, like some Gaelic chief or Hibernian demagogue, he was attended! How easy to portray the joyous fusion of the noisy strollers across the lawn, with the quieter but not less happy assemblage which had watched and enjoyed their pantomime — to trace the confluence of the two streams of discourse, imparting grace and rapidity to the one, and depth and volume to the other — to paint the brightening aspect of the grave censor, as his own reveries were flashed back on him in picturesque forms and brilliant colours — or to delineate the subdued countenance of his mercurial associate, as he listened to profound contemplations on the capacities and the duties of man!

Of Mr. Wilberforce, we have had occasion to write so recently, and so much at large, that though the Agamemnon of the host we celebrate — the very sun of the Claphamic system — we pause not now to describe him. His fair demesne was coterminous with that of Mr. Thornton; nor lacked there sunny banks, or sheltered shrubberies, where in each change of season, they revolved the captivity under which man was groaning, and projected schemes for his deliverance. And although such conclaves might scarcely be convened except in the presence of these two, yet were they rarely held without the aid of others, especially of such as could readily find their way thither from the other quarters of the sacred village.

Yet to that village would not seldom resort guests from more rural abodes which in that age, ignorant of iron railways, were regarded as sequestered dwellings in remote districts of our island. Among them not the least frequent, or welcome, or honoured



visitor, was one who descended to the table-land of Clapham Common from that loftier table-land, once covered by the ancient forest of Needwood. It is furrowed by several sloping valleys, each forming the bed of a rapid brook, which chafes and twists itself round the roots of oaks so venerable as to have sheltered the deer beneath their branches in the time of the Heptarchy. In later times a keeper's lodge, which takes its name from the adjacent village of Yoxall, was erected for the protection of the game at the confluence of two of these rivulets; for the bolts of 'Guy of good Gisborne' had not rarely stricken down the noblest bucks as they came to slake their thirst at those running waters. In the reign of George II. a family, deriving their name from the same 'Gisborne,' had added Yoxall Lodge to their large possessions, and pursued the sports of the forest with scarcely less ardour than the bold outlaw himself. But this hereditary passion for the chase did not descend to Thomas Gisborne, the second of the race among the modern proprietors of Yoxall Lodge. Though fortune had given him wealth, and nature had endowed him with a figure as graceful and as elastic as that of the deer which peeped out on his mansion from the neighbouring hollies, and though his spirit was brave and joyous, yet his stout heart and masculine intellect were wedded to a feminine soul. Though he never feared the face or the understanding of mortal man, he shrank with a kind of virgin sensitiveness from the coarse familiarities of the field and of the world. Though gay, even to uproar, in the morning of life, and in his interior circle, he appeared beyond those narrow precincts, like a man driven by constitutional shyness into silence and seclusion. When, therefore, the freeholders of his native county proposed to send him as their representative to the House of Commons, he turned away with aversion from such a plunge into the miry waters of parliamentary strife, and from such an exile from the glades and the forest banks over which he rejoiced. He was not a man to be cajoled out of his own happiness by any concert of his neighbours' tongues, and escaped the importunities of the electors of Derbyshire by taking sanctuary in the Church. In early manhood he became one of her ministers, and sheltered himself, for the rest of his days, among the 'patrician trees' and the 'plebeian underwood' of his forest, from the conflicts of the aristocracy and commonalty of the Palace of Westminster.

Though secluded, he was not solitary. A daughter of the ancient family of Babington became the companion of his retirement, during a period of almost sixty years; staying her steps upon his arm, imbibing wisdom from his lips, gathering hope and courage from his eye, and rendering to him such an homage, or rather such

a worship, as to draw from the object of it a raillery so playful, so tender, and so full of meaning, that perhaps it ultimately enhanced the affectionate error which, for the moment, it rebuked.

Husband, father, and householder as he was, a house was all but a superfluity to Mr. Gisborne. From dawn till sunset he never willingly passed an hour away from the tangled brakes or the sunny uplands of Needwood, or the banks of the neighbouring Trent. There it was his joyful and inexhaustible employment to study the ways of nature, to investigate her laws, and to meditate the books by which he maintained his intercourse with the outer world. No plant lay in the large circuit of those daily walks, of which he did not understand the history and the use. No animal crossed his path or rose into the air before him, in which he did not recognise a familiar acquaintance. No picturesque grouping of the oaks and hollies in that ancient chase—no play of light or shade through their foliage—no glimpse of the remoter landscape caught his eye, without being treasured in his memory and transferred to his sketch-book. And when, as would occasionally happen, ‘one much pent in cities’ was permitted to partake in these forest rambles, Mr. Gisborne would throw aside, under the genial influence of the place, the reserve which hung upon him in crowded saloons, and would pour himself out in a stream of discourse, sometimes grave and speculative, but more frequently sparkling with humorous conceits, or eddying into retrospects of the comedy of life, of which he had been a most attentive, though too often a silent spectator. Nothing could exceed the amiable good humour with which, on such occasions, he would amuse himself with the incapacity of his metropolitan companion to decipher, without his aid, a single line of that fair scroll of beauty and of wisdom which he himself could read in every scene through which they passed. Their walks, however, would sometimes conduct them to a spot, the charm of which it required no rural tastes to feel, and no rural knowledge to interpret.

It was the populous village in which Mr. Gisborne ministered as a country clergyman. Among its poor inhabitants he seemed to remember nothing except that they were his flock, and he their pastor. Happy in his books, his pencil, his writings, and his home, he never was so happy as when, sitting by the poor man’s hearth, he chatted with him about crops and village politics, or with the goodwife about her children, her chickens, and her bees, and then gently deposited, in hearts softened by his kindness, some prolific seeds of a more than human wisdom.

From the lodge in the centre of the forest, to the fold thus settled on the slopes of it, there was happily a distance of three

miles, which became to Mr. Gisborne a species of enlarged though most secluded Study, where, from day to day, he revolved that series of publications to which he was indebted throughout many years for an extensive influence and celebrity. That fame is now dying away. The thoughts of his times were widely dissimilar from those of the present generation. A more impassioned poetry, a severer philosophy, and a theology far more inquisitive and adventurous, are consigning to a premature oblivion many of his books, which his contemporaries hailed with delight, and with predictions of enduring renown. Nor were those predictions uttered without much apparent reason. For Mr. Gisborne contributed largely to the formation of the national mind on subjects of the highest importance to the national character. He was the expositor of the 'Evangelical' system to those cultivated or fastidious readers, who were intolerant of the ruder style of his less refined brethren. He addressed them as a poet, as a moralist, as a natural philosopher, and as a divine. But he wrought in a spirit, which, though perfectly free and independent, was yet imitative. Cowper was his model in poetry; Paley, whom he opposed, was yet the prompter of his moral philosophy; and Bishop Tomline suggested the most considerable of his theological treatises. His literary fame, if it shall indeed endure the competitions of a later age, must rest on his sermons. They were regarded by his contemporaries as models in a style of composition in which the English language has scarcely a single specimen of excellence. Except one or two discourses of South, and as many of Robert Hall, we have absolutely nothing to put in competition with the pulpit oratory of France. We possess, indeed, many homiletical essays of exuberant power, wealth, and eloquence, but scarcely an attempt attesting even the consciousness of what constitutes the perfection of a homily. Mr. Gisborne approached more nearly than any Anglican clergyman of his time towards the ideal of that much neglected art. His sermons were perspicuous in the analysis of truth, and energetic in the inculcation of it. He knew how to assign to the principal topic of each discourse its due predominance, and to the collateral topics their just subordination. His sermons were remarkable for that unity of design which is indispensable to beauty, and that elevated singleness of purpose, without which the most exquisite graces of composition are utterly worthless in the pulpit. They were scriptural, uncompromising, and transparently luminous; and deservedly obtained a cordial acceptance and a wide popularity. If the unction of Mr. Gisborne's addresses had been equal to their vigour; if the sentiment had been as profound as it was genuine, or as elevated as it was just; if the style had been as easy

as it was correct; if imagination had done her work as effectually as taste performed her office; if, in a word, those sermons had been animated by the soul of an orator as fully as they were moulded by the hand of an artist, a scholar, and a divine, they would have been not merely the delight of his own times, but a part of the literary inheritance of Englishmen in our own and in future ages.

There have been saints of every possible variety of Christian heroism,—martyrs of truth and martyrs of humanity, thaumaturgists and ascetics, mystics and missionaries. But there is a form of sanctity more rare than any of these, and more excellent than most of them. It is that sanctity which ‘passing through the valley of Baca maketh it a well,’ which throws over this dark world an atmosphere like that of a yet unforfeited paradise. It is the sanctity of happiness. It is the conversion of the life of man into a continued eucharistic service, rendered to a gracious father by a grateful and confiding child.

There are yet living some who passed many years in the closest intimacy with Thomas Gisborne which can subsist between men of different generations, who, looking back on that long familiar intercourse, can recollect nothing which detracted from his apparently unsullied innocency:—no irreverent forgetfulness of the divine presence, and no ostentatious recognition of it; no haughtiness of spirit, no morose or vindictive temper, no morbid desire for human applause, no cold indifference to human affection, no inordinate self-indulgence, no world idolatry. Such self-conquest is the indispensable basis of whatever else is great in human character. The philanthropists of vice and self-indulgence delineated by Fielding and Sheridan are as absolute chimeras as the centaurs and hypogriffs of romance. Yet no accumulation of mere negative virtues will render any man either great or good. To a conscience void of offence, Mr. Gisborne added a kind of passion for all the works of God, animate and inanimate, and a profound and tranquil love of God himself. It was no unseemly or loquacious affection, but a grave and cheerful complacency, resting on the meek assurance that he was himself the object of the unceasing benignity of his Maker. The sun shone with a mild and unclouded lustre on his path, as he pursued it from his youth to the grave, with tranquil energy and undisturbed composure.

It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting; but it is better still to go to the house of heaven-descended peace and heaven-ascending thankfulness. They who once passed many happy days beneath the roof of Thomas Gisborne, have since visited many an abode of sorrow and of joy, bearing with them a recollection which may have allayed both the



tumultuous mirth and the depressing sorrows of this transient state. It is the recollection of one to whom everything yielded some innocent delight, and over whom nothing ever cast a cloud of melancholy. Their memories recall the chamber in which he passed such of his studious hours as were withdrawn from his outdoor life — a chamber which it might seem no dealer in household furniture had ever been permitted to enter, but where books and manuscripts, plants and pallets, tools and philosophical instruments, birds perched on the shoulder, or nestling in the bosom of the student, or birds curiously stuffed by his hands, usurped the places usually assigned to the works of the upholsterer. They can still revive the remembrance of his library, embellished with his own paintings, and thronged with kindred, friends, and neighbours, among whom he would sometimes converse with the mature wisdom of old age, and sometimes disport himself with the unrestrained gaiety of boyhood. Theology, literature, art, natural history, gardening, and rambles through his forest, filled the leisure of a life devoted to pastoral and to domestic duties. Yet they did not deprive him either of the time or of the inclination to take his share in those pursuits to which his friends at Clapham had consecrated their existence. His heart was with them. His pen and his purse were ever at their command.

During a period of more than fifty years, an intimacy the most confiding and affectionate, united Thomas Gisborne to William Wilberforce. The member for Yorkshire made Yoxall Lodge his country residence, and the Staffordshire divine had his suburban sojourn at the house of his friend at Clapham. Among the secretaries of that village he took his share in labour and in deliberation, whether the abolition of the slave trade, the diffusion of Christianity, the war against vice and ignorance, or the advancement of evangelical theology, was the object of the passing day. Yet, when he was engaged in these public duties, they who knew him best would perceive that their publicity was painful, and their seeming ostentation offensive to him. When seated at the cabinet held in the library of Henry Thornton, it was obvious that the heart of Thomas Gisborne was still turning to his parish, and that his imagination was far away in the recesses of his forest. It had been the cradle of his childhood; and there, at the age of eighty-seven, his body was committed to the grave in the fulness of that sure and certain hope which had thrown her bright hues over every passage of his protracted residence on earth. It was committed to the grave in the fulness of that soothing and grateful memory, also, which they who stood together round his bier retained of a father and of a friend, from whom they had learned

very many lessons; but above all, the lesson that though the path through earth to heaven be usually pursued through a vale of tears, it may also be sometimes pursued through green pastures, and by waters of comfort, with a light from heaven itself lightening every step, and shining more and more unto the perfect day.

It is not permitted to any coterie altogether to escape the spirit of coterie. Clapham Common, of course, thought itself the best of all possible commons. Such, at least, was the opinion of the less eminent of those who were entitled to house-bote and dinner-bote there. If the common was attacked, the whole homage was in a flame. If it was laughed at, there could be no remaining sense of decency amongst men. The commoners admired in each other the reflection of their own looks, and the echo of their own voices. A critical race, they drew many of their canons of criticism from books and talk of their own parentage; and for those on the outside of the pale, there might be, now and then, some failure of charity. Their festivities were not exhilarating. New faces, new topics, and a less liberal expenditure of wisdom immediately after dinner, would have improved them. Thus, even at Clapham, the discerning might perceive the imperfections of our common nature, and take up the lowly confession of the great Thomas Erskine—"After all, gentlemen, I am but a man."

But if not more than men, they were not less. They had none of the intellectual coxcombry since so prevalent. They did not instil philosophic and political neology into young ladies and officers of the Guards, through the gentle medium of the fashionable novel. They mourned over the ills inseparable from the progress of society, without shrieks or hysterics. They were not epicures for whose languid palates the sweets of the rich man's banquet must be seasoned with the acid of the poor man's discontent. Their philanthropy did not languish without the stimulant of satire; nor did it degenerate into a mere ballet of tender attitudes and sentimental pirouettes. Their philosophy was something better than an array of hard words. Their religion was something more than a collection of impalpable essences; too fine for analysis, and too delicate for use. It was a hardy, serviceable, fruitbearing, and patrimonial religion.

They were the sons, by natural or spiritual birth, of men who, in the earlier days of Methodism, had shaken off the lethargy in which, till then, the Church of England had been entranced—of men, by whose agency the great evangelic doctrine of faith, emerging in its primeval splendour, had not only overpowered the contrary heresies, but had perhaps obscured some kindred truths. This earlier generation of the evangelic school had been too ingen-

uous, and too confident in the divine reality of their cause, to heed much what hostility they might awaken. They had been content to pass for fools, in a world whose boasted wisdom they accounted folly. In their once central and all-pervading idea, they had found an influence hardly less than magical. They had esteemed it impossible to inculcate too emphatically, or too widely, that truth which Paul had proclaimed indifferently to the idolaters of Ephesus, the revellers of Corinth, the sophists of Athens, and the debauched citizens of sanguinary Rome.

Their sons adopted the same creed with equal sincerity and undiminished earnestness, but with a far keener sense of the hindrances opposed to the indiscriminate and rude exhibition of it. Absolute as was the faith of Mr. Wilberforce and his associates, it was not possible that the system called 'Evangelical' should be asserted by them in the blunt and uncompromising tone of their immediate predecessors. A more elaborate education, greater familiarity with the world and with human affairs, a deeper insight into science and history, with a far nicer discernment of mere conventional proprieties, had opened to them a range of thought, and had brought them into relations with society, of which their fathers were comparatively destitute. Positiveness, dogmatism, and an ignorant contempt of difficulties, may accompany the firmest convictions, but not the convictions of the firmest minds. The freedom with which the vessel swings at anchor, ascertains the soundness of her anchorage. To be conscious of the force of prejudice in ourselves and others, to feel the strength of the argument we resist, to know how to change places internally with our antagonists, to understand why it is that we provoke their scorn, disgust, or ridicule—and still to be unshaken, still to adhere with fidelity to the standard we have chosen—this is a triumph, to be won by those alone on whom is bestowed not merely the faith which overcomes the world, but the pure and peaceable wisdom which is from above.

And such were they whom the second generation of the Evangelical party acknowledged as their secular chiefs. They fell on days much unlike those which we, their children, have known—days less softened by the charities and courtesies, but less enervated by the frivolities of life. Since the fall of the Roman republic, there had not arisen within the bosom, and armed with the weapons, of civilisation itself, a power so full of menace to the civilised world as that which then overshadowed Europe. In the deep seriousness of that dark era, they of whom we speak looked back for analogies to that remote conflict of the nations, and drew evil auguries from the event of the wars which, from Sylla to Octavius, had dyed the earth with the blood of its inhabitants, to establish at length a

military despotism—ruthless, godless, and abominable. But they also reverted to the advent, even in that age of lust and cruelty, of a power destined to wage successful war, not with any external or earthly potentate, but with the secret and internal spring of all this wretchedness and wrong—the power of love, incarnate though divine—of love exercised in toils and sufferings, and at length yielding up life itself, that from that sacrifice might germinate the seeds of a new and enduring life—the vital principle of man's social existence, of his individual strength, and of his immortal hopes.

And as, in that first age of Christianity, truth, and with it heavenly consolation, had been diffused, not alone or chiefly by the lifeless text, but by living messengers proclaiming and illustrating the renovating energy of the message entrusted to them; so to those who, at the commencement of this century, were anxiously watching the convulsions of their own age, it appeared that the sorrows of mankind would be best assuaged, and the march of evil most effectually stayed, by a humble imitation of that inspired example. They therefore formed themselves into a confederacy, carefully organised and fearlessly avowed, to send forth into all lands, but above all into their own, the two witnesses of the Church—Scripture and Tradition;—scripture, to be interpreted by its divine Author to the devout worshippers—tradition, not of doctrinal tenets, but of that unextinguishable zeal, which, first kindled in the apostolic times, has never since wanted either altars to receive, or attendant ministers to feed and propagate the flame. Bibles, schools, missionaries, the circulation of evangelical books, and the training of evangelical clergymen, the possession of well-attended pulpits, war through the press, and war in parliament, against every form of injustice which either law or custom sanctioned—such were the forces by which they hoped to extend the kingdom of light, and to resist the tyranny with which the earth was threatened.

Nor was it difficult to distinguish or to grapple with their antagonists. The slave trade was then brooding like a pestilence over Africa; that monster iniquity which fairly outstripped all abhorrence, and baffled all exaggeration—converting one quarter of this fair earth into the nearest possible resemblance of what we conceive of hell, reversing every law of Christ, and openly defying the vengeance of God. The formation of the holy league, of which we are the chroniclers, synchronised with that unhappy illness which, half a century ago, withdrew Thomas Clarkson from the strife to which he was set apart and consecrated; leaving his associates to pursue it during the twelve concluding years, unaided by his presence, but not without the aid of his example, his sympathy, and his prayers.



They have all long since passed away, while he still lives (long may he live!) to enjoy honours and benedictions, for which the diadem of Napoleon, even if wreathed with the laurels of Goethe, would be a mean exchange. But, alas! it is not given to any one, not even to Thomas Clarkson, to enjoy a glory complete and unalloyed. Far from us be the attempt to pluck one leaf from the crown which rests on that time-honoured head. But with truth there may be no compromise, and truth wrings from us the acknowledgment, that Thomas Clarkson never lived at Clapham!

Not so that comrade in his holy war, whom, of all that served under the same banner, he seems to have loved the best. At the distance of a few bow-shots from the house of Henry Thornton, was the happy home in which dwelt Granville Sharpe; at once the abiding guest and the bosom friend of his more wealthy brothers. A critic, with the soul of a churchwarden, might indeed fasten on certain metes and bounds, hostile to the parochial claims of the family of Sharpe; but in the wider ken and more liberal judgment of the historian, the dignity of a true Claphamite is not to be refused to one whose evening walk and morning contemplations led him so easily and so often within the hallowed precincts.

Would that the days of Isaac Walton could have been prolonged to the time when Granville Sharpe was to be committed to the care of the biographers! His likeness from the easel of the good old Angler would have been drawn with an outline as correct and firm, and in colours as soft and as transparent as the portraits of Hooker or of Herbert, of Donne or of Walton. A narrative, no longer than the liturgy which they all so devoutly loved, would then have superseded the annals which now embalm his memory beneath that nonconforming prolixity which they all so devoutly hated.

The grandson of an Archbishop of York, the son of an Archdeacon of Northumberland, the brother of a Prebendary of Durham, Granville Sharpe, descending to the rank from which Isaac Walton rose, was apprenticed to a linen-draper of the name of Halsey, a Quaker, who kept his shop on Tower Hill. When the Quaker died, the indentures were transferred to a Presbyterian of the same craft. When the Presbyterian retired, they were made over to an Irish Papist. When the Papist quitted the trade, they passed to a fourth master, whom the apprentice reports to have had no religion at all. At one time a Socinian took up his abode at the draper's, and assaulted the faith of the young apprentice in the mysteries of the Trinity and the Atonement. Then a Jew came to lodge there, and contested with him the truth of Christianity itself. But blow from what quarter it might, the storm of controversy did but the more endear to him the shelter of his native nest, built for him by his

forefathers, like that of the swallow of the Psalmist, in the courts and by the altar of his God. He studied Greek to wrestle with the Socinian — he acquired Hebrew to refute the Israelite — he learned to love the Quaker, to be kind to the Presbyterian, to pity the Atheist, and to endure even the Roman Catholic. Charity (so he judged) was nurtured in his bosom by these early polemics, and the affectionate spirit which warmed to the last the current of his maturer thoughts, grew up, as he believed, within him, while alternately measuring crapes and muslins, and defending the faith against infidels and heretics.

The cares of the mercer's shop engaged no less than seven years of a life destined to be held in grateful remembrance as long as the language, or the history of his native land shall be cultivated among men. The next eighteen were consumed in the equally obscure employment of a clerk in the office of Ordnance. Yet it was during this period that Granville Sharpe disclosed to others, and probably to himself, the nature, so singular and so lovely, which distinguished him — the most inflexible of human wills, united to the gentlest of human hearts — an almost audacious freedom of thought, combined with profound reverence for hoar authority — a settled conviction of the wickedness of our race, tempered by an infantine credulity in the virtue of each separate member of it — a burning indignation against injustice and wrong, reconciled with pity and long-suffering towards the individual oppressor — all the sternness which Adam has bequeathed to his sons, wedded to all the tenderness which Eve has transmitted to her daughters.

As long as Granville Sharpe survived, it was too soon to proclaim that the age of chivalry was gone. The Ordnance clerk sat at his desk with a soul as distended as that of a Paladin bestriding his war-horse; and encountered with his pen such giants, hydras, and discourteous knights, as infested the world in the eighteenth century. He found the lineal representative of the Willoughbys de Parham in the person of a retired tradesman; and buried himself in pedigrees, feoffinents, and sepulchral inscriptions, till he saw his friend enjoying his ancestral privileges among the Peers of Parliament. He combated, on more than equal terms, the great Hebraist, Dr. Kennicott, in defence of Ezra's catalogue of the sacred vessels, chiefs, and families. He laboured long, and with good success, to defeat an unjust grant made by the Treasury to Sir James Lowther of the Forest of Inglewood, and the manor and castle of Carlisle. He waged a less fortunate war against the theatrical practice of either sex appearing in the habiliments of the other. He moved all the powers of his age, political and intellectual, to abolish the impressment of seamen, and wound up a dialogue

with Johnson on the subject, by opposing the scriptural warning, 'Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil,' to what he described as the 'plausible sophistry and important self-sufficiency' of the Sage. Presenting himself to the then Secretary of State, Lord Dartmouth, he denounced, with prophetic solemnity, the guilt of despoiling and exterminating in the Charib war that miserable remnant of the aboriginal race of the Antilles. As a citizen of London, he came to the rescue of Crosby, the Lord Mayor, in his struggle with the House of Commons. As a citizen of the world, he called on earth and heaven to stay the plagues of slavery and the slave-trade, and advocated the independence of America with such ardour as to sacrifice to it his own. Orders had reached his office to ship munitions of war to the revolted colonies. If his hand had entered the account of such a cargo, it would have contracted in his eyes the stain of innocent blood. To avoid that pollution he resigned his place, and his means of subsistence, at a period of life when he could no longer hope to find any other lucrative employment. But he had brothers who loved and supported him; and his release from the fatigues of a subordinate office left him free to obey the impulses of his own brave spirit, as the avenger of the oppressed.

While yet a chronicler of gunpowder and small arms, a negro, abandoned to disease, had asked of him an alms. Silver and gold he had none, but such as he had he gave him. He procured for the poor sufferer medical aid, and watched over him with affectionate care until his health was restored. The patient, once more become sleek and strong, was an object on which Barbadian eyes could not look without cupidity; and one Lisle, his former master, brought an action against Granville Sharpe for the illegal detention of his slave. Three of the infallible doctors of the Church of Westminster — Yorke, Talbot, and Mansfield — favoured the claim; and Blackstone, the great expositor of her traditions, hastened, at their bidding, to retract a heresy on this article of the faith into which his uninstructed reason had fallen. Not such the reverence paid by the hard-working clerk to the inward light which God had vouchsafed to him. He conned his entries indeed, and transcribed his minutes all day long, just as if nothing had happened; but throughout two successive years he betook himself to his solitary chamber, there, night by night, to explore the original sources of the Law of England, in the hope that so he might be able to correct the authoritative dogmas of Chancellors and Judges. His inquiries closed with the firm conviction that, on this subject at least, these most learned persons were but shallow pretenders to learning. In three successive cases he struggled against them with various and

doubtful success; when fortune, or, be it rather said, when Providence, threw in his way the negro Somerset.

For the vindication of the freedom of that man, followed a debate, ever memorable in legal history for the ability with which it was conducted; — for the first introduction to Westminster Hall of Francis Hargrave; — for the audacious assertion then made by Dunning, of the maxim, that a new brief will absolve an advocate from the disgrace of publicly retracting any avowal however solemn, of any principle however sacred; — for the reluctant abandonment by Lord Mansfield of a long-cherished judicial error; — and for the recognition of a rule of law of such importance, as almost to justify the poets and rhetoricians in their subsequent embellishments of it; — but above all memorable for the magnanimity of the prosecutor, who, though poor and dependent and immersed in the duties of a toilsome calling, supplied the money, the leisure, the perseverance, and the learning, required for this great controversy — who, wholly forgetting himself in his object, had studiously concealed his connection with it, lest, perchance, a name so lowly should prejudice a cause so momentous — who, denying himself even the indulgence of attending the argument he had provoked, had circulated his own researches in the name, and as the work, of a plagiarist who had republished them — and who, mean as was his education, and humble as were his pursuits, had proved his superiority as a Jurist, on one main branch of the law of England, to some of the most illustrious Judges by whom that law had been administered.

Never was abolitionist more scathless than Granville Sharpe by the reproach to which their tribe has been exposed, of insensibility to all human sorrows, unless the hair of the sufferer be thick as wool, and the skin as black as ebony. His African clients may indeed have usurped a larger share of his attachment than the others; and of his countless schemes of beneficence, that which he loved the best was the settlement at Sierra Leone of a free colony, to serve as a *point-d'appui* in the future campaigns against the slave trade. But he may be quoted as an experimental proof of the infinite divisibility of the kindly affections. Much he wrote, and much he laboured, to conciliate Great Britain and America; much to promote the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures; much to interpret the prophecies contained in them; much to refute the errors of the Socinians; much to sustain the cause of Grattan and the Irish volunteers; much to recommend reform in Parliament; and much, it must be added, (for what is man in his best estate?) to dissuade the emancipation of the Catholics. Many also were the benevolent societies which he formed or fostered; and his publi-



cations, who can number? Their common aim was to advance the highest interests of mankind; but to none of them, with perhaps one exception, could the praise either of learning or of originality be justly given. For he possessed rather a great soul than a great understanding; and was less admirable for the extent of his resources, than for the earnest affection and the quiet energy with which he employed them.

Like all men of that cast of mind, his humour was gay and festive. Among the barges which floated on a summer evening by the villa of Pope, and the chateau of Horace Walpole, none was more constant or more joyous than that in which Granville Sharpe's harp or kettle-drum sustained the flute of one brother, the hautboy of another, and the melodious voices of their sisters. It was a concord of sweet sounds, typical, as it might seem, of the fraternal harmony which blessed their dwelling on the banks of that noble river. Much honest mirth gladdened that affectionate circle, and brother Granville's pencil could produce very passable caricatures when he laid aside his harp, fashioned, as he maintained, in exact imitation of that of the son of Jesse. To complete the resemblance, it was his delight, at the break of day, to sing to it one of the songs of Zion in his chamber—raised by many an intervening staircase far above the Temple gardens, where young students of those times would often pause in their morning stroll, to listen to the not unpleasing cadence, though the voice was broken by age, and the language was to them an unknown tongue.

On one of their number he condescended to bestow a regard, the memory of which would still warm the heart, even were it chilled by as many years as had then blanched that venerable head. The one might have passed for the grandson of the other; but they met with mutual pleasure, and conversed with a confidence not unlike that of equals. And yet, at this period, Granville Sharpe was passing into a state which, in a nature less active and benevolent than his, would have been nothing better than dotage. In him it assumed the form of a delirium, so calm, so busy, and giving birth to whims so kind-hearted, as often to remind his young associate of Isaac Walton's saying, that the very dreams of a good man are acceptable to God. To illustrate by examples the state of a mind thus hovering on the confines of wisdom and fatuity, may perhaps suggest the suspicion that the old man's infirmities were contagious; but even at that risk they shall be hazarded; for few of the incidents of his more vigorous days delineate him so truly.

William Henry, the last Duke of Gloucester, (who possessed many virtues, and even considerable talents, which his feeble talk and manners concealed from his occasional associates,) had a great

love for Granville Sharpe; and nothing could be more amiable than the intercourse between them, though the one could never for a moment forget that he was a prince of the blood-royal, and the other never for a moment remembered that he was bred up as a linen-draper's apprentice. Beneath the pompous bearing of the Guelph lay a basis of genuine humility, and the free carriage of the ex-clerk of the Ordnance was but the natural expression of a lowliness unembarrassed by any desire of praise or dread of failure. A little too gracious, perhaps, yet full of benignity, was the aspect and the attitude of the Duke, when, at one of the many philanthropic assemblages held under his presidency, Granville Sharpe (it was no common occurrence) rose, and requested leave to speak. He had, he said, two schemes, which, if recommended by such advocates, must greatly reduce the sum of human misery. To bring to a close the calamities of Sierra Leone, he had prepared a law for introducing there King Alfred's frank pledge, a sovereign remedy for all such social wounds. At once to diminish the waste of human life in the Peninsula, and to aid the depressed workmen in England, he had devised a project for manufacturing portable woolpacks; under the shelter of which ever-ready intrenchments, our troops might, without the least danger to themselves, mow down the ranks of the oppressors of Spain.

A politician, as well as a strategist, he sought and obtained an interview with Charles Fox, to whom he had advice of great urgency to give for conducting the affairs of Europe. If the ghost of Burke had appeared to lecture him, Fox could hardly have listened with greater astonishment, as his monitor, by the aid of the Little Horn in Daniel, explained the future policy of Napoleon and of the Czar. 'The Little Horn! Mr. Sharpe,' at length exclaimed the most amiable of men, 'what in the name of wonder do you mean by the Little Horn?' 'See there,' said the dejected interpreter of prophecy to his companion, as they retired from the Foreign Office — 'See there the fallacy of reputation! Why, that man passes for a statesman; and yet it is evident to me that he never before so much as heard of the Little Horn!'

As his end drew nearer, he became less and less capable of seizing the distinction between the prophecies and the newspapers. It rained as heavily on the 18th of February, 1813, as on the afternoon when Isaac Walton met the future Bishop of Worcester at Bunhill Row, and found, in the public-house which gave them shelter, that double blessing of good ale and good discourse which he has so piously commemorated. Not such is the fortune of the young Templar, who, in a storm at least as pitiless, met Granville Sharpe at the later epoch moving down Long Acre as nimbly as

ever, with his calm thoughtful countenance raised gently upwards, as was usual with him—as though gazing on some object which it pleased him well to look upon. But his discourse, though delivered in a kind of shower-bath, to which his reverie made him insensible, was as characteristic, if not as wise, as that of the learned Sanderson. ‘You have heard,’ he began, ‘my young friend, of this scandalous proceeding of the Rabbi Ben Mendoli? No? Why, then, read this brief account of it which I have been publishing. About a year ago the Rabbi, being then at Damascus, saw a great flame descend, and rest on one of the hills which surround the city. Soon after, he came to Gibraltar. There he discovered how completely that celestial phenomenon verified my interpretation of the words—“Arise, shine, for thy light is come,” &c.; and now he has the audacity not only to deny that he ever saw such a flame, but to declare that he never pretended to have seen it. Can you imagine a clearer fulfilment of the predicted blindness and obduracy of Israel before their restoration?’

That great event was to have taken place within a few months, when the still more awful event which happens to all living, removed this aged servant of God and man from the world of shadows to the world of light. To die at the precise moment when the vast prophetic drama was just reaching its sublime catastrophe, was a trial not easily borne, even by a faith so immovable as his. But death had no other sting for him. It awakened his pure spirit from the dreams which peopled it during the decay of his fleshy tabernacle; and if that change revealed to him that he had ill-interpreted many of the hard sentences of old, it gave him the assurance that he had well divined the meaning of one immutable prophecy—the prophecy of a gracious welcome and an eternal reward to those who, discerning the brethren of their Redeemer in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the prisoner, should for His sake feed, and shelter, and clothe, and visit, and comfort them.

United in the bonds of that Christian charity, though wide as the poles asunder in theological opinions, were Granville Sharpe and William Smith; that other denizen of Clapham who has already crossed our path. He lived as if to show how much of the coarser duties of this busy world may be undertaken by a man of quick sensibility, without impairing the finer sense of the beautiful in nature and in art; and as if to prove how much a man of ardent benevolence may enjoy of this world’s happiness, without any steeling of the heart to the wants and the calamities of others. When he had nearly completed fourscore years, he could still gratefully acknowledge that he had no remembrance of any bodily pain or

illness; and that of the very numerous family of which he was the head, every member still lived to support and to gladden his old age. And yet, if he had gone mourning all his days, he could scarcely have acquired a more tender pity for the miserable, or have laboured more habitually for their relief. It was his ill fortune to provoke the invective of Robert Southey, and the posthumous sneers of Walter Scott—the one resenting a too well merited reproach, the other indulging that hate of Whigs and Whiggery which, in that great mind, was sometimes stronger than the love of justice. The enmity even of such men he, however, might well endure, who possessed, not merely the attachment and confidence of Charles Fox and his followers, but the almost brotherly love of William Wilberforce, of Granville Sharpe, and of Thomas Clarkson. Of all their fellow-labourers, there was none more devoted to their cause, or whom they more entirely trusted. They, indeed, were all to a man *homo-ousians*, and he a disciple of Belsham. But they judged that many an erroneous opinion respecting the Redeemer's person would not deprive of His gracious approbation, and ought not to exclude from their own affectionate regards, a man in whom they daily saw a transcript, however imperfect, of the Redeemer's mercy and beneficence.

Thirty-seven years have rolled away since these men met at Clapham, in joy and thanksgiving, and mutual gratulation, over the abolition of the African slave trade. It was still either the dwelling-place, or the haunt, of almost every one of the more eminent supporters of that measure; and it may be that they exulted beyond the limits of sober reason in the prospects which that success had opened to them. Time has brought to light more than they knew or believed of the inveteracy of the evil; and of the impotency of law in a protracted contest with avarice. But time has also ascertained, that throughout the period assigned for the birth and death of a whole generation of mankind, there has been no proof, or reasonable suspicion, of so much as a single evasion of this law in any one of the transatlantic British colonies. Time has shown that to that law we may now confidently ascribe the deliverance of our own land from this blood-guiltiness for ever. Time has ascertained that the solemn practical assertion then made of the great principles of justice, was to be prolific of consequences, direct and indirect, of boundless magnitude. Time has enlisted on our side all the powers and all the suffrages of the earth; so that no one any longer attempts to erase the brand of murder from the brow of the slave trader. Above all, time has shown that, in the extinction of the slave trade, was involved, by slow but inevitable steps, the extinction of the slavery which it had created and sus-



tained. This, also, was a result of which, as far as human agency is concerned, the mainsprings are to be found among that sect to which, having first given a name, we would now build up a monument.

It is with a trembling hand that we inscribe on that monument the name of Zachary Macaulay; for it is not without some mis-giving lest pain should be inflicted on the living, while we pass, however reverently, over the half-extinguished ashes of the dead. The bosom shrines, erected in remembrance of them, may be yet more intolerably profaned by rude eulogy than by unmerited reproach; and the danger of such profanation is the more imminent, when the judgment, though unbiassed by any ties of consanguinity, is not exempt from influences almost as kindly and as powerful. It is, however, an attempt which he who would write the sectarian history of Clapham could not wholly decline, without an error like that of omitting the name of Grotius in a sectarian history of the Arminians.

A few paces apart from each other, in the church of Westminster, are three monuments, to which, in God's appointed time, will be added a fourth, to complete the sepulchral honours of those to whom our remotest posterity will ascribe the deliverance of mankind from the woes of the African slave trade, and of colonial slavery. There is a yet more enduring temple, where, engraven by no human hands, abides a record, to be divulged in its season, of services to that cause, worthy to be commemorated with those of William Wilberforce, of Granville Sharpe, of Zachary Macaulay, and of Thomas Clarkson. But to that goodly fellowship the praise will be emphatically given. Thomas Clarkson is his own biographer, and pious hands have celebrated the labours of two of his colleagues. Of Mr. Macaulay no memorial has been made public, excepting that which has been engraved on his tomb in Westminster Abbey, by some eulogist less skilful than affectionate. It is no remediless omission; although it would require talents of the highest order, to exhibit a distinct and faithful image of a man whose peculiarity it was to conceal, as far as possible, his interior life, under the veil of his outward appearance. That his understanding was proof against sophistry, and his nerves against fear, were, indeed, conclusions to which a stranger arrived at the first interview with him. But what might be suggesting that expression of countenance, at once so earnest and so monotonous—by what manner of feelings those gestures, so uniformly firm and deliberate, were prompted—whence the constant traces of fatigue on those overhanging brows, and on that athletic though ungraceful figure—what might be the charm which excited amongst his

chosen circle a faith approaching to superstition, and a love rising to enthusiasm, towards a man whose demeanour was so inanimate, if not austere? — it was a riddle of which neither Gall nor Lavater could have found the key. That much was passing within, which that ineloquent tongue and those taciturn features could not utter; that nature had compensated her other bounties by refusing him the means of a ready interchange of thought; and that he had won, without knowing how to court, the attachment of all who approached him closely — these were discoveries which the most casual acquaintance might make, but which they whom he honoured with his intimacy, and they alone, could explain.

To them he appeared a man possessed by one idea, and animated by one master passion — an idea so comprehensive, as to impart a profound interest to all which indicated its influence over him — a passion so benevolent, that the coldest heart could not withhold some sympathy from him who was the subject of it. Trained in the hardy habits of Scotland in ancient times, he had received from his father much instruction in theology, with some Latin and a little Greek, when not employed in cultivating his father's glebe at Cardross, on the northern bank of the Clyde. While yet a boy, he had watched as the iron entered into the soul of the slaves, whose labours he was sent to superintend in Jamaica; and, abandoning with abhorrence a pursuit which had promised him early wealth and distinction, he pondered the question — how shall the earth be delivered from this curse? Turning to Sierra Leone, he braved for many years that deadly climate, that he might aid in the erection and in the defence of what was then the one city of refuge for the Negro race; and as he saw the slave trade crushing to the dust the adjacent tribes of Africa, he again pondered the question — how shall the earth be delivered from this curse?

That God had called him into being to wage war with this gigantic evil, became his immutable conviction. During forty successive years, he was ever burdened with this thought. It was the subject of his visions by day, and of his dreams by night. To give them reality, he laboured as men labour for the honours of a profession, or for the subsistence of their children. The rising sun ever found him at his task. He went abroad but to advance it. His commerce, his studies, his friendships, his controversies, even his discourse in the bosom of his family, were all bent to the promotion of it. He edited voluminous periodical works; but whether theology, literature, or politics were the text, the design was still the same — to train the public mind to a detestation of the slave trade and of slavery. He attached himself to most of the religious

and philanthropic societies of his age, that he might enlist them as associates, more or less declared, in his holy war. To multiply such allies, he called into existence one great association, and contributed largely to the establishment of another. In that service he sacrificed all that men may lawfully sacrifice — health, fortune, repose, favour, and celebrity. He died a poor man, though wealth was within his reach. He pursued the contest to the end, though oppressed by such pains of body as strained to their utmost tension the self-sustaining powers of the soul. He devoted himself to the severest toil, amidst allurements to luxuriate in the delights of domestic and social intercourse such as few indeed can have encountered. He silently permitted some to usurp his hardly-earned honours, that no selfish controversy might desecrate their common cause. He made no effort to obtain the praises of the world, though he had talents to command and a temper peculiarly disposed to enjoy them. He drew on himself the poisoned shafts of calumny; and, while feeling their sting as generous spirits alone can feel it, never turned a single step aside from his path to propitiate or to crush the slanderers.

They have long since fallen, or are soon to fall into unhonoured graves. His memory will be ever dear to those who hate injustice, and revere the unostentatious consecration of a long life to the deliverance of the oppressed. It will be especially dear to the few who closely observed, and who can yet remember how that self-devotion became the poetical element of a mind not naturally imaginative; what deep significance it imparted to an aspect and a demeanour not otherwise impressive; what energy to a temper, which, if not so excited, might perhaps have been phlegmatic; what unity of design to a mind constitutionally discursive; and what dignity even to physical languor and suffering, contracted in such a service. They can never forget that the most implacable enemy of the tyrants of the plantation and of the slave ship, was the most indulgent and generous and constant of friends; that he spurned, as men should spurn, the mere pageantry of life, that he might use, as men should use, the means which life affords of advancing the happiness of mankind; that his earthward affections, active and all-enduring as they were, could yet thrive without the support of human sympathy, because they were sustained by so abiding a sense of the Divine presence, and so absolute a submission to the Divine will, as raised him habitually to that higher region, where the reproach of man could not reach, and the praise of man might not presume to follow him.

Although, to repeat a mournful acknowledgment, the tent of Thomas Clarkson was pitched elsewhere, yet throughout the slave

trade abolition war, the other chiefs who hailed him as the earliest, and as among the mightiest of their host, kept their communications open by encamping in immediate vicinity to each other. Even to Lord Brougham the same station may, with poetical truth at least, be assigned by the Homer who shall hereafter sing these battles; for though, at that period, his London domicile was in the walks of the Inner Temple, yet might he not seldom be encountered in the less inviting walks which led him to the suburban councils of his brethren in command. There he formed or cemented attachments, of which no subsequent elevation of rank, or intoxicating triumph of genius, or agony of political strife, have ever rendered him forgetful. Of one of those denizens of Clapham he has published a sketch, of which we avail ourselves, not as subscribing altogether to the accuracy of it, but as we can thus fill up, from the hand of so great a Master, a part of our canvas which must have otherwise remained blank and colourless.

‘Mr. Stephen was a person of great natural talents, which, if accidental circumstances had permitted him fully to cultivate, and early enough to bring into play upon the best scene of political exertion—the House of Commons—would have placed him high in the first rank of English orators. For he had, in an eminent degree, that strenuous firmness of purpose and glowing ardour of soul, which lies at the root of all eloquence; he was gifted with great industry, a retentive memory, an ingenuity which was rather apt to err by excess than by defect. His imagination was, besides, lively and powerful; little, certainly, under the chastening discipline of severe taste, but often enabling him to embody his own feelings and recollections with great distinctness of outline, and strength of colouring. He enjoyed, moreover, great natural strength of constitution, and had as much courage as falls to the lot of most men. But having passed the most active part of his life in one of the West Indian colonies, where he followed the profession of a barrister, and having, after his return, addicted himself to the practice of a court which affords no scope at all for oratorical display, it happened to him, as it has to many other men of natural genius for rhetorical pursuits, that he neither gained the correct taste which the habit of frequenting refined society, and above all, addressing a refined auditory, can alone bestow, nor acquired the power of condensation, which is sure to be lost altogether by those who address hearers compelled to listen, like judges and juries, instead of having to retain them by closeness of reasoning, or felicity of illustration.

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It

must have struck all who heard him, when, early in 1808, he



entered Parliament under the auspices of Mr. Perceval, that whatever defects he had, arose entirely from accidental circumstances, and not at all from intrinsic imperfections; nor could any one doubt that his late entrance upon parliamentary life, and his vehemence of temperament, alone kept him from the front rank of debaters, if not of eloquence itself. With Mr. Perceval, his friendship had been long and intimate. To this the similarity of their religious character mainly contributed; for Mr. Stephen was a distinguished member of the evangelical party to which the minister manifestly leant without belonging to it; and he was one whose pious sentiments and devotional habits occupied a very marked place in his whole scheme of life. No man has, however, a right to question, be it ever so slightly, his perfect sincerity. To this his blameless life bore the most irrefragable testimony. A warm and steady friend—a man of the strictest integrity and nicest sense of both honour and justice—in all the relations of private society wholly without a stain—though envy might well find whereon to perch, malice itself, in the exasperating discords of religious and civil controversy, never could descry a spot on which to fasten. Let us add the bright praise, and which sets at nought all lesser defects of mere taste, had he lived to read these latter lines, he would infinitely rather have had this sketch stained with all the darker shades of its critical matter, than been exalted, without these latter lines, to the level of Demosthenes or of Chatham, praised as the first of orators, or followed as the most brilliant of statesmen. His opinions upon political questions were clear and decided, taken up with the boldness, felt with the ardour, asserted with the determination, which marked his zealous and uncompromising spirit. Of all subjects, that of the slave trade and slavery most engrossed his mind. His experience in the West Indies, his religious feelings, and his near connexion with Mr. Wilberforce, whose sister he married, all contributed to give this great question a peculiarly sacred aspect in his eyes; nor could he either avoid mixing it up with almost all other discussions, or prevent his views of its various relations from influencing his sentiments on other matters of political discussion.\*

The author of the preceding portrait enjoyed the happiness denied to the subject of it, not merely of witnessing, but of largely participating in, the last great act by which the labours borne by them in common, during so many preceding years, were consummated. It was a still more rare bounty of Providence, which reserved the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire as

\* *Speeches of Henry Lord Brougham*, vol. i. pp. 402—405.

a triumph for the statesman who, twenty-seven years before, had introduced into the House of Commons the first great act of tardy reparation to Africa. Crowned with honour and with length of days, to Lord Grey it has further been given, by the same benignant power, to watch, in the calm evening of life, the issues of the works of justice and of mercy which God raised him up to accomplish. With the evil omens, and with the too glowing anticipations of former times, he has been able to contrast the actual solution of this great practical enigma. He has lived to witness eleven years of unbroken tranquillity throughout countries where, till then, a single year undisturbed by insurrection was almost unknown—the extinction of feuds apparently irreconcilable—positions full of danger in former wars, now converted into bulwarks of our national power—an equal administration of justice in the land of the slave-courts and the cart-whip—a loyal and happy peasantry, where the soil was so lately broken by the sullen hands of slaves—penury exchanged for abundance—a population, once cursed by a constant and rapid decay, now progressively increasing—Christian knowledge and Christian worship universally diffused among a people so lately debased by Pagan superstitions—and the conjugal duties, with all their attendant charities, held in due honour by those to whom laws, written in the English language, and sanctioned by the Kings of England, had forbidden even the marriage vow. If, with these blessings, have also come diminished harvests of the cane and the coffee plant, even they who think that to export and to import are the two great ends of the social existence of mankind, have before them a bright and not very distant futurity. But he, under whose auspices the heavy yoke was at length broken, is contemplating, doubtless, with other and far higher thoughts, the interests of the world, from which, at no remote period, the inexorable law of our existence must summon him away. In that prospect, so full of awe to the wisest and the best, he may well rejoice in the remembrance that, in conferring on him the capacity to discern, and the heart to obey the supreme and immutable will, God enabled him to grasp the only clue by which the rulers of the world can be safely guided amidst the darkness and the intricacy of human affairs.

Such at least is the doctrine which, if Clapham could have claimed him for her own, Clapham would have instilled into that great Minister of the British Crown, to whom, more than to any other, she was prompt to offer her allegiance. Politics, however, in that microcosm, were rather cosmopolitan than national. Every human interest had its guardian, every region of the globe its representative. If the African continent and the Caribbean Archi-

pelago were assigned to an indefatigable protectorate, New Holland was not forgotten, nor was British India without a patron. It was the special charge of Mr. Grant, better known to the present generation by the celebrity of his sons, but regarded at the commencement of this century as the real ruler of the rulers of the East, the Director of the Court of Directors. At Leadenhall Street he was celebrated for an integrity exercised by the severest trials; for an understanding large enough to embrace, without confusion, the entire range and the intricate combinations of their whole civil and military policy; and for nerves which set fatigue at defiance. At Clapham, his place of abode, he was hailed as a man whose piety, though ever active, was too profound for much speech; a praise to which, among their other glories, it was permitted to few of his neighbours there to attain or to aspire. With the calm dignity of those spacious brows, and of that stately figure, it seemed impossible to reconcile the movement of any passion less pure than that which continually urged him to requite the tribute of India by a treasure, of which he who possessed it more largely than any other of the sons of men has declared, that 'the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.' No less elevated topic (so judged the inquisitive vicinage) could be the subject of his discourse, as he traversed their gorse-covered common, attended by a youth, who, but for the fire of his eye, and the occasional energy of his bearing, might have passed for some studious and sickly competitor for medals and prize poems. If such were the pursuits ascribed by Clapham to her occasional visitant, it is but a proof that even 'patent Christianity' is no effectual safeguard against human fallibility.

Towards the middle of the last century, John Martyn of Truro was working with his hands in the mines near that town. He was a wise man, who, knowing the right use of leisure hours, employed them so as to qualify himself for higher and more lucrative pursuits; and who, knowing the right use of money, devoted his enlarged means to procure for his four children a liberal education. Henry, the younger of his sons, was accordingly entered at the University of Cambridge, where in January 1801, he obtained the degree of bachelor of arts, with the honorary rank of senior wrangler. There also he became the disciple, and, as he himself would have said, the convert of Charles Simeon. Under the counsels of that eminent teacher, the guidance of Mr. Wilberforce, and the active aid of Mr. Grant, he entered the East India Company's service as a chaplain. After a residence in Hindostan of about five years, he returned homewards through Persia in broken health. Pausing at Shiraz, he laboured there during twelve months

with the ardour of a man, who, distinctly perceiving the near approach of death, feared lest it should intercept the great work for which alone he desired to live. That work (the translation of the new Testament into Persian) at length accomplished, he resumed his way towards Constantinople, following his Mihmander (one Hassan Aga) at a gallop, nearly the whole distance from Tabriz to Tocat, under the rays of a burning sun and the pressure of continual fever. On the 6th of October 1812, in the thirty-second year of his age, he brought the Journal of his life to a premature close, by inscribing in it the following words, while he sought a momentary repose under the shadow of some trees at the foot of the Caramanian Mountains: 'I sat in the orchard, and thought with sweet comfort and fear of God — in solitude, my company, my friend, and comforter. Oh, when shall time give place to eternity! When shall appear that new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness and love! There shall in nowise enter anything that defileth; none of that wickedness which has made man worse than wild beasts; none of those corruptions which add still more to the miseries of mortality, shall be seen or heard of any more.' Ten days afterwards those aspirations were fulfilled. His body was laid in the grave by the hands of strangers at Tocat, and to his disembodied spirit was revealed that awful vision which it is given to the pure in heart, and to them alone, to contemplate.

Amidst all the discords which agitate the Church of England, her sons are unanimous in extolling the name of Henry Martyn. And with reason: for it is in fact the one heroic name which adorns her annals from the days of Elizabeth to our own. Her apostolic men, the Wesleys and Elliotts and Brainerds of other times, either quitted, or were cast out of her communion. Her *Acta Sanctorum* may be read from end to end with a dry eye and an unquickened pulse. Henry Martyn, the learned and the holy, translating the Scriptures in his solitary bungalow at Dinapore, or preaching to a congregation of five hundred beggars, or refuting the Mahommedan doctors at Shiraz, is the bright exception. It is not the less bright, because he was brought within the sphere of those secular influences which so often draw down our Anglican worthies from the Empyrean along which they would soar, to the levels, flat through fertile, on which they must depasture. There is no concealing the fact, that he annually received from the East India Company an ugly allowance of twelve hundred pounds; and though he would be neither just nor prudent who should ascribe to the attractive force of that stipend one hour of Henry Martyn's residence in the East, yet the ideal would be better without it.



Oppressively conclusive as may be the arguments in favour of a well-endowed and punctually paid 'Establishment,' they have, after all, an unpleasant earthly savour. One would not like to discover that Polycarp, or Bernard, or Boniface, was waited on every quarter-day by a plump bag of coin from the public treasury. To receive a thousand rupees monthly from that source, was perhaps the duty, it certainly was not the fault, of Henry Martyn. Yet it was a misfortune, and had been better avoided if possible.

When Mackenzie was sketching his *Man of Feeling*, he could have desired no better model than Henry Martyn, the young and successful competitor for academical honours; a man born to love with ardour and to hate with vehemence; amorous, irascible, ambitious, and vain; without one torpid nerve about him; aiming at universal excellence in science, in literature, in conversation, in horsemanship, and even in dress; not without some gay fancies, but more prone to austere and melancholy thoughts; patient of the most toilsome inquiries, though not wooing philosophy for her own sake; animated by the poetical temperament, though unvisited by any poetical inspiration; eager for enterprise, though thinking meanly of the rewards to which the adventurous aspire; uniting in himself, though as yet unable to concentrate or to harmonise them, many keen desires, many high powers, and much constitutional dejection — the chaotic materials of a great character, destined to combine, as the future events of life should determine, into no common forms, whether of beauty and delight, or of deformity and terror.

Among those events, the most momentous was his connection with Charles Simeon, and with such of his disciples as sought learning at Cambridge, and learned leisure at Clapham. A mind so beset by sympathies of every other kind could not but be peculiarly susceptible to the contagion of opinion. From that circle he adopted, in all its unadorned simplicity, the system called Evangelical — that system of which (if Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Knox, and the writers of the English Homilies may be credited) Christ himself was the author, and Paul the first and greatest interpreter.

Through shallow heads and voluble tongues, such a creed (or indeed any creed) filtrates so easily, that of the multitude who maintain it, comparatively few are aware of the conflict of their faith with the natural and unaided reason of mankind. Indeed he who makes such an avowal will hardly escape the charge of affectation or of impiety. Yet if any truth be clearly revealed, it is, that the apostolic doctrine was foolishness to the sages of this

world. If any unrevealed truth be indisputable, it is, that such sages are, at this day, making, as they have ever made, ill-disguised efforts to escape the inferences, with which their own subscriptions or admissions teem. Divine philosophy divorced from human science—celestial things stripped of the mitigating veils woven by man's wit and fancy to relieve them—form an abyss as impassable at Oxford now, as it was at Athens eighteen centuries ago. To Henry Martyn the gulf was visible, the self-renunciation painful, the victory complete. His understanding embraced, and his heart reposed in the two comprehensive and ever germinating tenets of the school in which he studied. Regarding his own heart as corrupt, and his own reason as delusive, he exercised an unlimited affiance in the holiness and the wisdom of Him, in whose person the divine nature had been allied to the human, that so, in the persons of his followers, the human might be allied to the divine.

Such was his religious theory—a theory which doctors may combat, or admit, or qualify, but in which the readers of Henry Martyn's biography, letters, and journals, cannot but acknowledge that he found the resting-place of all the impetuous appetencies of his mind, the spring of all his strange powers of activity and endurance. Prostrating his soul before the real, though the hidden, Presence he adored, his doubts were silenced, his anxieties soothed, and every meaner passion hushed into repose. He pursued divine truth (as all who would succeed in that pursuit must pursue it), by the will rather than the understanding; by sincerely and earnestly searching out the light which had come into the world, by still going after it when perceived, by following its slightest intimations with faith, with resignation, and with constancy; though the path it disclosed led him from the friends and the home of his youth across wide oceans and burning deserts, amidst contumely and contention, with a wasted frame and an overburdened spirit. He rose to the sublime in character, neither by the powers of his intellect, nor by the compass of his learning, nor by the subtlety, or range, or the beauty of his conceptions (for in all these he was surpassed by many), but by the copiousness and the force of the living fountains by which his spiritual life was nourished. Estranged from a world once too fondly loved, his well-tutored heart learned to look back with a calm though affectionate melancholy on its most bitter privations. Insatiable in the thirst for freedom, holiness, and peace, he maintained an ardour of devotion which might have passed for an erotic delirium, when contrasted with the Sadducean frigidity of other worshippers. Regarding all the members of the great human family as his kindred in sorrow and in exile, his zeal for their

welfare partook more of the fervour of domestic affection, than of the kind but gentle warmth of a diffusive philanthropy. Elevated in his own esteem by the consciousness of an intimate union with the Eternal Source of all virtue, the meek missionary of the cross exhibited no obscure resemblance to the unobtrusive dignity, the unfaltering purpose, and the indestructible composure of Him by whom the cross was borne. The ill-disciplined desires of youth, now confined within one deep channel, flowed quickly onward towards one great consummation: nor was there any faculty of his soul, or any treasure of his accumulated knowledge, for which appropriate exercise was not found in the high enterprise to which he was devoted.

And yet nature, the great leveller, still asserting her rights even against those whose triumph over her might seem the most perfect, would not seldom extort a burst of passionate grief from the bosom of the holy Henry Martyn, when memory recalled the image of her to whom, in earlier days, the homage of his heart had been rendered. The writer of his life, embarrassed with the task of reconciling such an episode to the gravity befitting a hero so majestic, and a biography so solemn, has concealed this passage of his story beneath a veil at once transparent enough to excite, and impervious enough to baffle curiosity. A form may be dimly distinguished of such witchery as to have subdued at the first interview, if not at the first casual glance, a spirit soaring above all the other attractions of this sublunary sphere. We can faintly trace the pathway, not always solitary, of the pious damsel, as she crossed the bare heaths of Cornwall on some errand of mercy, and listened, not unmoved, to a tremulous voice, pointing to those heights of devotion from which the speaker had descended to this lower worship. Then the shifting scene presents the figure—alas! so common—of a mother, prudent, and inexorable, as if she had been involved in no romance of her own some brief twenty years before; and then appears the form (deliciously out of place) of the apostolic Charles Simeon, assuming, but assuming in vain, the tender intervenient office. In sickness and in sorrow, in watchings and in fastings, in toils and perils, and amidst the decay of all other earthly hopes, this human love blends so touchingly with his diviner enthusiasm, that even from the life of Henry Martyn there can scarcely be drawn a more valuable truth, than that, in minds pure as his, there may dwell together in most harmonious concord, affections which a coarse, low-toned, ascetic morality would describe as distracting the heart between earth and heaven.

Yet it is a life pregnant with many other weighty truths. It was passed in an age when men whom genius itself could scarcely

rescue from abhorrence, found in their constitutional sadness, real or fictitious, not merely an excuse for grovelling in the style of Epicurus, but even an apology for deifying their sensuality, pride, malignity, and worldly-mindedness, by hymns due only to those sacred influences, by which our better nature is sustained in the warfare with its antagonist corruptions. Not such the gloom which brooded over the heart of Henry Martyn. It solicited no sympathy, was never betrayed into sullenness, and sought no unhallowed consolation. It assumed the form of a depressing consciousness of ill desert; mixed with fervent compassion for a world which he at once longed to quit, and panted to improve. It was the sadness of an exile gazing wistfully towards his distant home, even while soothing the grief of his brethren in captivity. It was a sadness akin to that which stole over the heart of his Master, while, pausing on the slope of the hills which stand round about Jerusalem, he wept over her crowded marts and cloud-capped pinnacles, hastening to a desolation already visible to that prescient eye; though hidden by the glare and tumult of life from the obdurate multitude below. It was a sadness soon to give place to an abiding serenity in the presence of that compassionate Being who had condescended to shed many bitter tears, that he might wipe away every tear from the eyes of his faithful followers.

Tidings of the death of Henry Martyn reached England during the Parliamentary debates on the renewal of the East India Company's charter; and gave new impetus to the zeal with which the friends and patrons of his youth were then contending for the establishment of an Episcopal see at Calcutta, and for the removal of all restraints on the diffusion of Christianity within its limits. In the roll of names most distinguished in that conflict, scarcely one can be found which does not also grace the calendar of Clapham. It was a cause emphatically Claphamic. John Venn, to whom the whole sect looked up as their pastor and spiritual guide, was at that time on his deathbed. He had been the projector, and one of the original founders, of the society for sending missionaries of the Anglican communion to Africa and the East—a body which, under the name of the 'Church Missionary Society,' now commands a wider field of action, and a more princely revenue, than any Protestant association of the same character. To him who prompted the deeper meditations, partook the counsels, and stimulated the efforts of such disciples, some memorial should have been raised by a Church which to him, more than to any of her sons, is indebted for her most effective instrument for propagating her tenets and enlarging her borders. But, linked though that name was to the kindest and the holiest thoughts of so many of the wise and good,



it must be passed over in this place with this transient notice ; lest the reverence due to it should be impaired, as it certainly could not be strengthened, by a tribute on which might not unjustly rest some grave suspicion of partiality.

The shepherd was taken from his flock immediately after the success of the Parliamentary contest, and while their exultations, and the forebodings of their opponents, predicted the glorious, or the disastrous, results of Episcopacy, and of missions in India. At this distance of time, we know that these prophecies, whether of good or of evil, were uninspired. Neither Hindoos nor Mussulmen have revolted on the discovery that their European sovereigns have a belief and a worship of their own, which they seriously prefer to the faith of Brama or of Mahomet. But neither has Benares yet ceased to number her pilgrims by myriads ; nor is the Rammadan violated from dawn to sunset. These results can hardly have surprised those who derived their anticipations of the future from a careful survey of the past.

The power before which the temples of pagan Rome fell down (like the mighty agencies of the material creation), is a silent invisible influence, obedient to no laws which human wisdom can explore ; though, at length, manifesting its reality in results which the dullest observation cannot overlook. It works by searching out affinities in the elements of man's moral and social nature ; by separating such as are incongruous, and by combining the rest into organic forms, animated by a common life. It works by the repulsive force of mutual antipathies, and by the plastic force of self-denying love ; and exhibits its presence in the Christian system, as in its noblest form, and most complete development. And though the prolific energies of this renovating power may often appear to slumber, and though, even when roused into activity, it operates but slowly and imperfectly, yet is it the one vital principle of this otherwise corrupt and corrupting world ; and is not less the source of light and of order now, than when it brooded over the dark primitive chaos.

Thus earth's history is but as some incoherent rhapsody of wild joys and maddening sorrows, if not regarded as the progressive fulfilment of the Supreme Will, effected by the ministry, sometimes spontaneous, at other times reluctant, of other wills subordinate to the Supreme. And that passage of history which is to unfold the religious and intellectual regeneration of Hindostan, will, like the rest, delineate the strife, the reverses, and the long delay, which must precede and allay the final triumph. It will tell of men devoting themselves, in constancy and resignation, to labours of which they must never witness the recompense ; and

obeying every intimation of the good pleasure of God, even when He may have appeared to have abandoned to their own weakness the champions of His truth. It will trace the path of the heralds of peace, illuminated amidst the deep surrounding darkness by the inward light of faith, and by the outward light which the inspired records throw on the state, the prospects, and the duties of man. And it will also tell of the restoration of those records to the supremacy for which their Divine Author destined them, among His instruments for the renewal of the image which He impressed on his moral creation, at the first dawn of its existence.

To effect that restoration, became the chief design of the devout men whose wiser Anglo-Catholic sons are now calling their fathers fools. Of that folly the ecumenical seat was in the immediate vicinity of our suburban common, reflecting from her glassy pools the mansions by which she is begirt. From them came forth a majority of the first members of the governing body of the 'Bible Society,' its earliest ministers or secretaries, and, above all, the first and greatest of its Presidents—John Lord Teignmouth; to the commemoration of whose life are dedicated the volumes from which our devious course commenced, and to which it at length returns.

As Mr. Carlyle has it, he was a noticeable man. While Napoleon had been founding an Empire in Europe, he had been ruling an Empire in Asia. The greatest of commercial corporations had made him their viceroy. The greatest of religious societies had made him their head. He was a man of letters too, and a man of hair-breadth escapes and strange adventures. He had been the friend of Sir William Jones, the associate of Warren Hastings, the adviser of Henry Dundas, and the choice of William Pitt when he had a trust to confer, superior in splendour, perhaps in importance, to his own. So, at least, said the chronicles of those times; but his own appearance seemed to say the contrary. If the *fascies* had really once been borne before the quiet, everyday looking gentleman who was to be seen walking with his children on Clapham Common, or holding petty sessions of the peace for the benefit of his neighbours there, then Clapham Common had totally misconceived what manner of men governors-general are. The idea of the common was as magnificent as that of a Lord Mayor in the mind of Martinus Scriblerus. But a glance at our Arungzebe, in the Clapham coach, was enough to dispel the illusion. How a man who had sat on the Musnud of Calcutta, could now sit so patiently between Messrs. Smith and Brown of St. Mildred's, Cornhill, and listen to them on the Paving Rate Question, with such genuine and good-humoured interest, was a question which long exercised

the faith and the tongues of the commoners, and which has ever since remained one of the dark problems of parochial history.

Lord Teignmouth was an estimable, accomplished, and religious man, on whom Providence bestowed extraordinary gifts of fortune, without any extraordinary gifts of nature. He was exalted to one of the highest places of the earth, but was not endowed with the genius or the magnanimity for which such places afford their meet exercise and full development. The roll of British viceroys in India includes other names than those of the Immortals. Clive, Hastings, and Wellesley transmitted empire, but could not transmit imperial minds to Amherst, or to Minto, or to Shore. He was not one of those who enlarge our conceptions of the powers occasionally confided to man. He rose to the summit of delegated dominion, without any sublime endurance or heroic daring. He wrote many speculations, political, moral, and religious; but without rendering more clear our knowledge of the actual condition of mankind; or our conjectures respecting what awaits them. He also wrote many verses; but can scarcely ever have awakened an echo in the hearts of others. The eminence of his position suggested comparisons which it would otherwise have been unmeaning to form. There is not room for many great men, in any age or in any dynasty; and he who, in the age of Napoleon and the dynasty of Clive, ruled with spotless virtue, and aimed only to consolidate the conquests of his predecessors, might justly deprecate the disparaging remark, that he was not cast in their gigantic mould. But the good Vespasian must always be prepared for invidious allusions to the mighty Julius.

The son of a supercargo, and the grandson of a captain in the marine of the East India Company, John Shore was destined from his youth to the service of the same employers. He was prepared for it at Harrow, where he recited Homer and Juvenal with Nathaniel Halded on the one hand, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan on the other; Samuel Parr being the common tutor of the three. On the same form were seen, nearly forty years later, three other boys, since known to fame as Lord Byron, Sir Robert Peel, and Sir George Sinclair. In the first of these triumvirates Halded, in the second Sinclair, were pointed out by Harrovian divination as the men destined to illuminate and command the ages which had given them birth. The spirit of prophecy did not rest on the Hill of Harrow! Neither indeed was the United Company of Merchants, trading to the East Indies at the first of those eras, precisely a school of the prophets. The one qualification they required of the future ministers and judges of their Empire, was a sound acquaintance with book-keeping. Mr. Shore was accordingly re-

moved from Harrow to a commercial school at Hackney. Among the students there was one who, at the distance of half a century, he met again ; the stately Marquis of Hastings, who then came to ask a lesson in the art of governing India, from the old school-fellow with whom he had once taken lessons in the art of double entry.

Enthusiasts are men of one idea. Heroes are men of one design. They who prosper in the world are usually men of one maxim. When Mr. Shore was toiling up the steep ascent trodden by writers, 'an old gentleman named Burgess' chanced to say to him, 'make yourself useful, and you will succeed.' Old Mr. Burgess never said a better thing in his life. It became the text on which the young civilian preached many a discourse to others, and to himself. With his own hand he compiled several volumes of the records of the secret political department. In a single year, he decided six hundred causes at Moorshedabad. He acquired the Hindostanee, Arabic, and Persian tongues ; and was summoned to employ that knowledge at what was then called the 'Provincial Council' at Calcutta. He revised one of the philippics launched by Francis against Warren Hastings, and lent his pen to prepare a memorial against the supreme court and Sir Elijah Impey. So useful, indeed, did he make himself to the opponents of Hastings, that he was appointed by that great man (oriental and occidental politics having much in common) to a seat in his supreme council of four. But, whatever might be his change of party, Mr. Shore never changed his maxim. He presided at the Board of Revenue. He acted as revenue commissioner in Dacca and Behar. He drew up plans of judicial reform. Ever busy, and ever useful, he remained in India till Hastings himself quitted it, when they returned in the same ship to England—the ever-triumphant Hastings to encounter Burke and the House of Commons ; the ever-useful Mr. Shore to receive from the Court of Directors a seat in the supreme council of three, established under Mr. Pitt's India Bill.

Again he bent his way to the East, and again enjoyed, under the rule of Lord Cornwallis, abundant opportunities of acting up to the precept of old Mr. Burgess. He sustained nearly all the drudgery which, in every such combination, falls to the lot of some single person ; assuming, as his peculiar province, the settlement of the revenues of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. The result of his labours was that momentous decision, remaining in force to this day, which has recognised the right of the Zemindars to the land, in the double character of renters and landlords—a measure against which there is such an array of authority and argument, as to compel a



doubt whether, on this occasion at least, Mr. Shore did not render a service useful rather to the sovereigns of India, than to their subjects.

To himself the result was most important. The time had come when Mr. Pitt hoped to witness the introduction into India of the pacific system which, at his instance, Parliament had enjoined. He committed that task to Mr. Shore; wisely judging that the author of the territorial settlement possessed in an eminent degree the habits, the principles, and the temper, which qualify men for an unambitious and equitable course of policy. With that charge he sailed a third time for the East, in the character of Governor-General.

He had been eminently useful, and had succeeded eminently. But now the old maxim began to wear out. He who would climb an oak must, as a great living writer has observed, change the nature of his efforts, and quicken his pace after he has once fairly set foot on the branches. Old Mr. Burgess had taught how the highest advancement might be obtained. He had not taught how it might be improved. Sir John Shore (such was now the title of the Governor-General) brought to that commanding station, knowledge, industry, courage, and disinterestedness; with a philanthropy as pure as ever warmed the bosom of any of the rulers of mankind. But he did not bring to it the wide survey, the prompt decision, and the invincible will, of the great statesmen who, before and after him, wielded that delegated sceptre. The sense of subordination, and the spirit of a subordinate, still clung to him. To be useful to the Board of Control, to be useful to the Court of Directors, to be useful to the Civil Service, to be useful to the Indian Army, limited his ambition as an administrator; and though the happiness of the nations of India was the object of his highest aspirations, his rule over them was barren, not only of any splendid enterprise, but even of any memorable plan for their benefit.

The four years of Sir John Shore's government was a period of peace, interrupted only by a single battle with the Rohilla chiefs. But it was a peace pregnant with wars, more costly and dangerous than any in which the British Empire in the East had been involved since the days of Clive and Laurence. The charges advanced against Sir John Shore by the more adventurous spirits who followed him, are all summed up in the one accusation — that his policy was temporising and timid. He acquiesced as an inert spectator in the successful invasion of the dominions of the Nizam by the Mahrattas. He fostered the power and the audacity of that warlike nation. He unresistingly permitted the growth of a French subsidiary force, in the service of three of the most considerable

native powers. He thwarted Lord Hobart's efforts for extending the dominion or influence of Great Britain in Ceylon, in the Carnatic, and in Tanjore. He allowed the growth and the aggressions in Northern India of that power which, under Runjeet Singh, afterwards became so formidable. He looked on passively while Tippoo was preparing for the contest into which he plunged, or was driven, to his own ruin, and to our no light peril.

These, and such as these, are the charges. The answer is drawn from the pacific injunctions of Parliament, and the pacific orders of the Company; and from the great truth, that ambitious wars are the direst curse, and peace the most invaluable blessing to mankind. In the course of his correspondence, Lord Teignmouth takes frequent occasion to announce the new or philosophical maxim, which as Governor-General he had substituted for his old or utilitarian maxim as a writer. It was that incontrovertible verity, that 'honesty is the best policy.' Sound doctrine, doubtless; but whether it is the best policy to be honest now and then, may admit of more dispute. Millions of men never lived together under a rule more severely just in intention than was that of Sir John Shore. But the Rohillas distrusted his equity. The Mah-rattas had no belief in his courage. The Nizam could not be convinced of his good faith. The oppressed Ryots were incredulous of his benevolence. Integrity, which, being only occasional and transient, passes for weakness and caprice, may work out evils even more intolerable than those of a consistent, resolute, and systematic injustice. Under their pacific Governor-General, the people of the East remembered the conquests of his predecessors, and were preparing to counteract, by secret or open hostilities, the further conquests of the pro-consuls who were to succeed him. His individual conscience could justly applaud the retrospect of his Asiatic dominion; but the national conscience, of which we have lately heard, had it any cause to exult in a pause of four years in an otherwise unbroken chain of successful aggressions on the princes and people of Hindostan?

When Napoleon wrote bulletins about the star of Austerlitz and the fulfilment of his destiny, we were all equally shocked at his principles and his style. Yet the apologies still ringing in our ears for the wars of Affghanistan, of Scinde, and of Gwalior, though made but yesterday by the highest authorities on either side of the House of Commons, were but a plagiarism from the Emperor of the French, in more correct, though less animated language. Nor could it be otherwise. Empire cannot be built up, either in the West or in the East, in contempt of the laws of God, and then be maintained according to the Decalogue. When the vessel must

either drive before the gale or founder, the helmsman no longer looks at the chart. When the pedestals of the throne are terror and admiration, he who would sit there securely must consult other rules than those of the Evangelists. Sir John Shore was the St. Louis of Governors-General. But if Clive had been like-minded, we should have had no India to govern. If Hastings had aspired to the title of 'The Just,' we should not have retained our dominion. If Wellesley had ruled in the spirit of his conscientious predecessor, we should infallibly have lost it. With profound respect for the contrary judgment of so good a man, we venture to doubt whether the severe integrity which forbade him to bear the sceptre of the Moguls as others had borne it, should not have also forbidden his bearing it at all. Needlessly to assume incompatible duties, is permitted to no man. Cato would have ceased to be himself had he consented to act as a lieutenant of the Usurper. The British viceroy who shall at once be true to his employers, and strictly equitable to the princes of India and their subjects, need not despair of squaring the circle.

Returning a third time to his native land, Lord Teignmouth fell into the routine of common duties, and of common pleasures, with the ease of a man who had taken no delight in the pomp or in the exercise of power; but whose heart had been with his home and with his books, even while Nabobs and Rajahs were prostrating themselves before him. He became eminent at the Quarter Sessions, took down again the volumes in which Parr had lectured him, thinned out his shrubberies, visited at country-seats and watering-places, watched over his family and his poor neighbours, sent letters of good advice to his sons (to the perusal of which the public are now invited with perhaps more of filial than of fraternal piety), and, in short, lived the life so pleasant in reality, so tedious in description, of a well-educated English gentleman, of moderate fortune, moderate desires, and refined tastes; with a fruitful vine on the walls of his house, and many olive branches round about his table.

If, as all Englishmen believe, this is the happiest condition of human existence, it illustrates the remark that happiness is a serious, not to say a heavy thing. The exhibition of it in these volumes is rather amiable than exhilarating. India-House traditions tell, that when a young aspirant for distinction there, requested one of the Chairs to inform him what was the proper style of writing political dispatches, the Chair made answer, 'The style we prefer is the *humdrum*.' This preference for the humdrum, enjoined perhaps by the same high authority, clung to Lord Teignmouth even after his return to Europe. He wrote as if to baffle the

critics, and lived as if to perplex the biographers. A foreigner amongst us might perhaps have sketched him as a specimen of a class peculiar to England. But the portrait is too familiar for exhibition to English eyes, though none is dearer to English hearts. Who that has contemplated and loved (as who has not?) the wise, cheerful, and affectionate head of some large household, filling up without hurry or lassitude the wide circle of domestic, neighbourly, and magisterial duties, and aiming at nothing more—let him say whether the second Lord Teignmouth could have rendered animating in description the tranquil years which the first Lord Teignmouth probably found the most grateful of his life in reality.

They were gliding quietly away, cheered by such retrospects as few have enjoyed, and gilded by hopes which few could so reasonably indulge, when the Society, then for the first time formed for the circulation of the Bible, placed him at their head; not as a mere titular chief, but as the President by whom all their deliberations were to be controlled, and as the dignitary by whom the collective body were to be represented. So high a trust could not have fallen into hands more curiously fitted for the discharge of it. There met and blended in him as much of the spirit of the world, and as much of the spirit of that sacred volume, as could combine harmoniously with each other. To the capacious views of a man long conversant with great affairs, he united a submission the most childlike to the supreme authority of those sacred records. To the high bearing of one for whose smile rival princes had sued, he added that unostentatious simplicity which is equally beyond the reach of those who solicit, and of those who really despise, human admiration. Conversant with mankind under all political and social aspects, and in every gradation of rank, it was at once his habit and his delight to withdraw from that indiscriminate intercourse into the interior circle where holy thoughts might be best nourished; and into the solitude where alone the modesty of his nature would permit the utterance of his devout affections. An Oriental scholar of no mean celebrity, and not without a cultivated taste for classical learning, he daily passed from such pursuits to the study of the Sacred Oracles—as one who, having sojourned in a strange land, returns to the familiar voices, the faithful counsels, and the well-proved loving-kindness of his father's house. To scatter through every tongue and kindred of the earth, the inspired leaves by which his own mind was sustained and comforted, was a labour in which he found full scope and constant exercise for virtues, hardly to be hazarded in the government of India.

Of India, indeed, and of the fame of his Indian administration,



he had become strangely regardless — witnessing silently, if not with indifference, the overthrow of his policy, and the denial of his claims to the respect and gratitude of mankind. Ordinary men, it is true, are but seldom agitated by the temperament by which men of genius expiate their formidable eminence; but Lord Teignmouth seems to have had more than his due share of constitutional phlegm. He governed an empire without ambition, wrote poetry without inspiration, and gave himself up to labours of love and works of mercy without enthusiasm. He was, in fact, rather a fatiguing man — of a narcotic influence in general society — with a pen which not rarely dropped truisms; sedate and satisfied under all the vicissitudes of life; the very antithesis and contradiction of the Hero, whose too tardy advent Mr. Carlyle is continually invoking. Yet he was one of those whom we may be well content to honour, while we yet wait the promised deliverer. He was a witness to the truth, that talents such as multitudes possess, and opportunities such as multitudes enjoy, may, under the homely guidance of perseverance and good sense, command the loftiest ascent to which either ambition or philanthropy can aspire; if that steep path be trodden with a firm faith in the Divine wisdom, a devout belief in the Divine goodness, and a filial promptitude of conformity to the Divine will.

To Lord Teignmouth, and to the other founders of the Bible Society, an amount of gratitude is due, which might, perhaps, have been more freely rendered, if it had been a little less grandiloquently claimed by the periodic eloquence of their followers. Her annual outbursts of self-applause are not quite justified by any success which this great Protestant *propaganda* has hitherto achieved over her antagonists. Rome still maintains and multiplies her hostile positions — heathen and Mahomedan temples are as numerous and as crowded as before — ignorance and sin continue to scatter the too fertile seeds of sorrow through a groaning world — and it is no longer doubtful that the aspect of human affairs may remain as dark as ever, though the earth be traversed by countless millions of copies of the Holy Text. The only wonder is, that such a doubt should ever have arisen — that reasonable people should have anticipated the renovation of man to the higher purposes of his being, by any single agency — without an apparatus as complex as his own nature — or without influences as vivifying as those which gave him birth. To quicken the inert mass around us, and to render it prolific, it is necessary that the primeval or patriarchal institute of parental training should be combined with an assiduous education; with the various discipline of life; with the fellowship of domestic, civil, and ecclesiastical

society; and, above all, with the re-creative power from on High devoutly implored and diligently cherished. The wicked habitations by which our globe is burdened, might, alas! be wicked still, though each of them were converted into a biblical library. And yet with the belief of the inspiration, whether plenary or partial, of the Scriptures, who can reconcile a disbelief of the momentous results with which the mere knowledge of them by mankind at large must be attended? Who will presume to estimate the workings of such an element of thought in such a world?—or to follow out the movements resulting from such a voice when raised in every tongue and among all people, in opposition to the rude clamour from without, or the still harsher dissonance from within?—or who will take on him to measure the consequences of exhibiting amongst all the tribes of men one immutable standard of truth—one eternal rule of duty—one spotless model for imitation?

If this vast confederacy of the Protestant and Greek churches was regarded by the less initiated with some degree of superstitious awe, and extolled beyond the severe limits of truth, the founders of the society were too well instructed in spiritual dynamics, to be themselves in bondage to that vulgar error. The more eminent of the Clapham sectarians thought of it but as one wheel in that elaborate mechanism, by which they believed that the world would at length be moved. Bell and Lancaster were both their welcome guests—schools, prison discipline, Savings' Banks, tracts, village libraries, district visitings, and church buildings—each, for a time, rivalled their cosmopolitan projects. But of their subordinate schemes none were so dear to them as that of prepossessing, in favour of their opinions and of their measures, the young men who were then preparing for ordination at Cambridge. Hence they held in special honour Isaac Milner, whose biography lies before us, and Charles Simeon, whose life is shortly to be published—both unavoidably residing at the university as their appointed sphere of labour; but both men of Clapham as frequent visitors, as habitual associates, and as zealous allies.

The biography of Isaac Milner, as recorded in the dense volume published by his niece, occupies a space nearly equal to that which the extant writers of antiquity have devoted to the celebration of all the worthies of Greece and Rome and Palestine put together. And yet of those who have still to reach the meridian of life, how few are aware, either that such a man was famous in the last generation, or what was the ground of his celebrity! Oh! ye candidates for fame, put not your faith in coteries. See here how lavishly applause may be bestowed in one age, and how profound

the silence into which it may die away in the next ! See how a man may have been extolled not thirty poor years ago, as a philosopher, historian, divine, and academic, on whom 'young England' has not one passing remembrance to bestow ! And although the present effort to revive and perpetuate his glory be made by a kinswoman, prepared for that undertaking by knowledge, by ability, and by zeal ; yet how avoid the conviction that the monument itself, like the name to which it is erected, is already becoming a premature ruin, and preaching one more unheeded sermon on the text which proclaims the vanity of all things ?

If the several tendencies of Isaac Milner to moral and intellectual greatness had been permitted to act freely, and if Fortune had not caressed and enervated him by her too benignant smiles, his name might have been now illustrious in the *Fasti Cantabrigienses*. But she bestowed on him the rewards of eminence, such as wealth, leisure, reputation and authority, without exacting the appointed price of toil and self-denial. Humble as was his hereditary station, he scarcely ever felt the invigorating influence of depending on his own exertions for subsistence, for comforts, or even for enjoyments. He soon obtained and soon resigned a fellowship at Queen's College, Cambridge, to become the president of that society ; an office to which ere long were added the deanery of Carlisle, and the mathematical chair once occupied by Newton. Three such sinecures were a burden, beneath which the most buoyant spirit could scarcely have moved with freedom. A splendid patrimony in the three per cents., or the golden repose of Lords Arden or Ellenborough, might agree well enough with the pursuits of a scholar or a statesman. Not so the laborious idleness of a deanery and a mastership, with their ceaseless round of chapters and elections, and founders' feasts, and enclosure questions ; and questions about new racks for the stables, and new rollers for the garden ; and squabbles with contumacious canons and much-digesting fellows. Newton himself could not, at the same time, have given laws to the Butteries and explored the laws of the universe ; and therefore it happened that Newton's successor was too busy for the duties of his lucrative professorship. Delilah bound the strong man with cords supplied by Mammon for the purpose.

From such toils he might have broken away, if the wily courtesan had not thrown around him the more seductive bondage of social and colloquial popularity. The keen sarcasm, that 'science is his forte — omniscience, his foible,' though of later date, could never have been aimed at any of the giants of Cambridge with more truth, or with greater effect, than at the former president of

Queen's. He had looked into innumerable books, had dipped into most subjects, whether of vulgar or of learned inquiry, and talked with shrewdness, animation, and intrepidity, on them all. Whatever the company and whatever the theme, his sonorous voice predominated over all other voices, even as his lofty stature, vast girth, and superincumbent wig, defied all competition. He was equally at home on a steeple-chase, and on final perseverance; and explained with the same confidence the economy of an ant-hill and the policy of the Nizam. During the last half of his life the Johnsonilatria was at its height; and among the aspirants to the vacant conversational throne, none appeared to have a fairer title than himself. Parr, with his pipe and his pedantry, was offensive. Bishop Watson was pompous and tiresome. Lord Ellenborough, the first of that name, was but an eminent phrase-manufacturer. But Isaac Milner, however inferior to the sage of Bolt Court in genius, in wit, in practical wisdom, in philology, and in critical discernment, ranged over a wider field of knowledge; with a memory as ready and retentive, with higher animal spirits, a broader humour, a less artificial style, and an enjoyment so cordial and sociable of his own talk, as compelled every one else to enjoy it. If less contentious than his great prototype, he was not less authoritative. But his topics were more out of the reach of controversy, his temper more serene, and his audience far more subservient. In the whole of his career, he was probably never once surrounded by such a circle as that which at 'The Club' reduced the dominion of Johnson to the form of a limited monarchy. At Carlisle, the Dean was the life of an otherwise lifeless amalgam of country squires and well-endowed prebendaries. At Cambridge, the Master was the soul of dinner and tea parties, otherwise inanimate. At London, he was the centre of a circle, ever prompt (as are all London circles) to render homage to literary and intellectual rank; especially when it can condescend to be amusing and natural, and can afford to disclaim all pretensions to the elaborate refinements of metropolitan society. Thus the syren Fortune raised her most alluring strain—the flattery which rewards colloquial triumphs—that so she might induce the warrior to relax his grasp of the weapons by which he might have achieved an enduring reputation.

Lashing himself to the mast, he still might have pursued his voyage to permanent renown, if the Enchantress had not raised up in his course certain fog-banks, to seduce him into the belief that he had already reached the yet far-distant haven. The moderators, arbiters of Cantabrigian honours, had not only assigned to him the dignity of senior-wrangler, but with it the title of *Incom-*



*parabilis*; the comparison having been ineffectually attempted with his competitors of the year 1774. Among the 'Transactions of the Royal Society,' the curious may discover three or four contributions bearing the name of Isaac Milner, which, though little noticed at the time, and wholly forgotten now, were allowed to establish, in favour of one who sat in Newton's seat, a station among men of science; which, in an age not propitious to such studies, few had the wish, and fewer still the power, to contest. No scientific work or discovery illustrates his name, except the discovery, much insisted on by his biographer, and much rejoiced in by himself, that the invisible girl of Leicester Square was not a Fairy enshrined in the brazen ball from which her speaking trumpets issued, but an old woman in the next room squeaking through hidden tubes, the orifices of which were brought into nice contact with corresponding apertures in the lips of those magical trumpets. On the opposite side of the same Square rose an observatory, where, a hundred years earlier, his great predecessor had investigated enigmas of greater significance. In literature, Dr. Milner was chiefly known as the Editor of the last two volumes of his brother's Church History, which apparently received great additions and improvements from his hands. They have been extolled as containing the most comprehensive and authentic account of the Reformation in Germany, and of the character of the great German Reformer;—a praise to which it is impossible to subscribe, for this, if for no other reason, that neither the Author nor the Editor had ever seen, or would have been able to read, one line of the many volumes written by Luther in his mother tongue, and even yet untranslated into any other. A biographical preface of a few pages, prefixed to a posthumous volume of the same brother's sermons, with two controversial pamphlets, complete the catalogue of the literary labours of more than half a century of learned and well-beneficed leisure. Of those pamphlets one was an assault on the ecclesiastical history of the late Dr. Haweis. The other made havoc of the person and writings of Herbert Marsh, the late Bishop of Peterborough. Marsh had denounced the sin and danger of giving people the Bible to read unyoked to the Prayer-book; and Milner answered him by an examination much more curious than civil, into the question—'Who, and what is Dr. Herbert Marsh?' The indignant liturgist replied by an equally courteous attempt to determine the who, and the what, touching Dr. Isaac Milner. With cassocks torn, and reputations not much exalted, the combatants retired from the field, and never again appeared among the aspirants to literary renown. Adulation whispered to them both that such glory was already theirs, and in her harlotry and her

blandishments betrayed them into the belief of that too welcome assurance.

But Isaac Milner was no ordinary person. His body (the very image of the informing mind) was athletic and capacious, yet coarse and clumsy withal, and alive, far more than is usual with the giant brood, to every vicissitude of pleasure and of pain. His muscular and his nervous structure seemed to belong to two different men, or rather to be of different sexes. The sense of vast physical power was unattended by animal courage; and the consciousness of great intellectual strength animated him to no arduous undertakings. Robust as he was and omnivorous, he was haunted by imaginary maladies and ideal dangers; shuddering at the east wind, and flying to a hiding-place at the sound of thunder. In the pursuit of knowledge, he was as an elephant forcing his way through saplings, and bending them to his purpose with a proboscis alike firm and flexible; yet at the next moment obeying the feeblest hand, alarmed by the most transient blaze, and turned out of his way by the first mournful gong or joyous cymbal. He was a kind of Ajax-Andromache, combining such might with such sensibility as made him at once admirable, loveable, and inefficient. Call at the lodge at Queen's in the evening, and you heard him with stentorian lungs tumbling out masses of knowledge, illuminated by remarks so pungent, and embellished with stories, illustrations, gestures, and phrases so broad and uncereemonious, that you half expected the appearance of the Lady Margaret, to remind the master of the house that she had built that long gallery, and those oriel windows, for meditation and studious silence. Call again in the morning, and you found him broken-hearted over some of the sorrows to which flesh is heir, or agitated by some collegiate controversy, or debating with his apothecary how many scruples of senna should enter into his next draught, as though life and death were in the balances. Thus erratic in all his pursuits, and responsive to every outward impression, he failed in that stern perseverance, without which none may become the teachers, the rulers, or the benefactors of mankind, and with which perhaps but few can be much courted as companions, or much loved as friends.

But so to be loved and courted, should not be regarded as a mere selfish luxury. A wise and good man (and such was Isaac Milner) will regard popular acceptance as an advantage convertible to many excellent uses; and so he considered it. His great talents were his social talents. In talk, ever ready, ever animated, and usually pregnant with profound meaning, he found the law, and fulfilled the end, of his sublunary existence. He talked with children (his chosen associates) inimitably. It was like a theo-

logical lecture from Bunyan, or a geographical discourse from De Foe. He talked with the great and the rich, as one who was their equal in wealth, and their superior in worship. He talked with pugilists, musicians, and graziers, at once to learn and to interpret the mysteries of their several crafts. He talked with physicians to convince them that their art was empirical. He talked with politicians to rouse them to the dangers of Catholic emancipation. He talked on paper to his correspondents pleasantly and affectionately, though, on the chapter of his own affections, too abundantly. He talked also to his chosen and intimate friends, but not in the same fitful strain. To them, from the abundance of the heart, he spoke on the theme which alone gave any unity of design to the otherwise incongruous habits of his life; and which alone harmonised the passages, droll and melancholy, pompous and affectionate, bustling and energetic, of which it was composed. It was that theme which engages the latest thoughts of all men—the retrospect and the prospect; the mystery within, and the dread presence without; the struggle, and the triumph, and the fearful vengeance; and whatever else is involved in the relations which subsist between mortal man and the eternal Source of his existence. To search into those relations, and into the duties and hopes and fears flowing from them, was the end which Isaac Milner still proposed to himself, under all his ever-varying moods. From his brother he had derived the theological tenets, for the dissemination of which the History of the Church had been written. Reposing in them with inflexible constancy, he drew from them hopes which, notwithstanding his constitutional infirmities, imparted dignity to his character, and peace to his closing hours. He was the intellectual chief of his party, and the members of it resorted to him at Cambridge, there to dispel doubts, and thence to bring back responses, oracular, authoritative, and profound. Nor could they have made a better choice; for to his capacity, learning, and colloquial eloquence, he added a most absolute sincerity and good faith. He had an instinct which could detect at a glance, and a temper which loathed, all manner of cant and false pretension; and he estimated at their real worth the several kinds of religious theatricals, liveries, and free-masonries.

Kind-hearted, talkative, wise old man! from the slumbers of many bygone years how easy is it to raise his image—joyful, as when he exulted over his exorcism of the clothes-tearing ghost of Sawston; or jocund, as when he chuckled over the remembrance of the hearty box he inflicted on the ears of Lord Archibald Hamilton, who, in all the pride of pugilism, had defied the assault

of unscientific knuckles; or grandiloquent, as when he reviewed the glories of his first vice-chancellorship, in which he had expelled from the Senate Lucius Catalina Frend; or the triumphs of his second consulate, when, having thundered his philippics against Marcus Antonius Brown, he was hailed as *Pater Academicæ*. Well! he is gone, and Alma Mater has still her heads of houses, men of renown; but if once again the table could be spread in that hospitable old dining-room at Queen's, with the facetious Dean at the head of it, there is not among the incomparable wranglers, and conversing Encyclopædias of them all, any one who would be fit to sit over against him as Croupier.

As a member of the Confederation of the Common, the Dean of Carlisle administered the province assigned to him rather by the weight of his authority, than by any active exertions. Under the shelter of his name his college flourished as the best cultured and most fruitful nursery of the evangelical neophytes of Cambridge. From a theological school maintained at Elland, in Yorkshire, at the charge of the Clapham exchequer, an unbroken succession of students were annually received there; destined, at the close of their academical career, to ascend and animate the pulpits of the national church. But if to the President of Queen's belonged the dignity of *Præpositus* of the evangelical youth of the University, the far more arduous and responsible office of *Archididascalus* was occupied by a fellow of the adjacent royal college.

Long Chamber at Eton has been the dormitory of many memorable men, and King's has been to many a famous Etonian little better than a permanent dormitory. But about seventy years ago was elected, from the one to the other of those magnificent foundations, a youth, destined thenceforward to wage irreconcilable war with the slumbers and the slumberers of his age. Let none of those (and they are a great multitude) who have enshrined the memory of Charles Simeon in the inner sanctuary of their hearts, suppose that it is in a trifling or irreverent spirit that the veil is for a moment raised, which might otherwise conceal the infirmities of so good a man. He was indeed one of those on whom the impress of the Divine image was distinct and vivid. But the reflected glory of that image (such was his own teaching) is heightened, not tarnished, by a contrast with the poverty of the material on which it may be wrought, and of the ground from which it emerges.

They who recollect the late Mr. Terry, the friend of Walter Scott, may imagine the countenance and manner of Charles Simeon. To a casual acquaintance he must frequently have appeared like some truant from the green-room, studying in clerical costume for the part of Mercutio, and doing it scandalously ill.



Such adventurous attitudes, such a ceaseless play of the facial muscles, so seeming a consciousness of the advantages of his figure, with so seeming an unconsciousness of the disadvantages of his carriage—a seat in the saddle so triumphant, badinage so ponderous, stories so exquisitely unbefitting him about the pedigree of his horses or the vintages of his cellar—the caricaturists must have been faithless to their calling, and the under-graduates false to their nature, if pencil, pen, and tongue had not made him their prey. Candid friends were compelled (of course, by the force of truth and conscience) to admit that he was not altogether clear of the sin of coxcombry; and the worshippers of Bacchus and of Venus gave thanks that they were jolly fellows, and not like this Pharisee.

To the reproach of affectation and conceit, his disciples made answer, that their master had shed his original manner as soon and as completely as his original teeth; and that the new or artificial manner was not only more deeply rooted than the old, but was in fact as natural; being but the honest though awkward effort of the soul within, to give vent to the most genuine feelings for which it could find no other utterance. To the charge of hypocrisy, they replied, that it was related to truth in that sense only in which opposites and contradictions are related. They maintained that even the superficial weaknesses of their teacher ministered to his real designs; just as the very offal of the Holocaust feeds the sacred flame by which the offering is consumed. Here, they said, was a man beset by difficulties enough to have baffled the whole school of Athens, as brought together by the imagination of Raphael D'Urbino—by inveterate affectations, by the want of learning, by the want of social talents, by the want of general ability of any kind, by the want of interest in the pursuits of his neighbours, by their want of sympathy in his pursuits, by the want of their good-will, nay, by the want of their decided and hearty animosity. Yet thus unprovided for the contest, he gained a victory which the sternest cynic in that glorious assemblage might have condescended to envy, and the most eloquent of the half-inspired sages there, to extol. Slowly, painfully, but with unfaltering hopes, he toiled through more than fifty successive years, in the same narrow chamber and among the same humble congregation—requited by no emoluments, stimulated by no animating occurrences, and unrewarded, until the near approach of old age, by the gratitude or the cordial respect of the society amidst which he lived. Love soaring to the Supreme with the lowliest self-abasement, and stooping to the most abject with the meekest self-forgetfulness, bore him onward, through fog or sunshine, through calm or

tempest. His whole life was but one long labour of love—a labour often obscure, often misapplied, often unsuccessful, but never intermitted, and at last triumphant.

At the close of each academical year, a crowd of youths, just entering into the business of life, received from Charles Simeon his parting counsels and benediction. They had been his pupils, his associates, and his grateful admirers. Without money and without price, he had sedulously imparted to them a science, which, to many a simple mind, compensated for the want of any other philosophy; and which, to the best and ripest scholars, disclosed the fountains whence all the streams of truth are salient, and the boundless expanse of knowledge towards which they are all convergent. It was the science of which God himself is the author, and men sent of God the interpreters, the revelation, conscience, and history the records. It was that science which explains the internal connection of this world's history; in which law and ethics and politics have their common basis; which alone imparts to poetry and art their loftier character; without which the knowledge of mind and of mental operations is an empty boast, and even the severer problems of the world's material economy are insoluble. It was that science for the diffusion of which the halls and colleges of that learned university had been almost exclusively founded—the only science which Cambridge neglected, and which Charles Simeon taught. And yet the teacher was neither historian, poet, artist, lawyer, politician, nor philosopher. He was simply a devout and believing man who, in the language of Bunyan, 'dwelt far from the damp shadows of Doubting Castle,' amidst the sunshine of those everlasting hills whence stout Mr. Greatheart and brave Mr. Hopeful, in days of yore, surveyed the boundless prospect, and inhaled the fresh breezes which welcomed them at the close of their pilgrimage. Thither their modern follower conducted his pilgrims by a way which Mr. Worldly-wisdom could never find, and which Mr. Self-confidence despised, when it was pointed out to him.

In the Church of the Holy Trinity at Cambridge, every Sunday, during more than half a century, witnessed the gathering of a crowd which hung on the lips of the preacher, as men hearken to some unexpected intelligence of a deep but ever-varying interest. Faces pale with study or furrowed by bodily labour, eyes failing with age or yet undimmed by sorrow, were bent towards him with a gaze, of which (with whatever other meaning it might be combined) fixed attention was the predominant character. Towards the close of that long period, the pulpit of St. Mary's was, occasionally, the centre of the same attraction, and with a still more impressive

result. For there were critics in theology, and critics in style and manner, and critics in gastronomy, thronging and pressing on each other, as once on Mars' Hill, to hear what this babbler might say; listening with the same curiosity, and adjudicating on what they had heard, in very much the same spirit. Yet he to whom this homage was rendered, was a man of ungraceful address; with features which ceased to be grotesque only when they became impassioned; with a voice weak and unmusical; and to whom no muse was propitious. His habits, and his very theory of composition, were such as seemed to promise empty pews and listless auditors; for every discourse was originally constructed (to use his own phrase) as a 'skeleton,' with all the hard processes and the fine articulations as prominent as his logical anatomy could render them—the bony dialectic being then clothed with the fibrous and muscular rhetoric, in such manner as the meditations of the preceding, or the impulses of the passing hour might suggest. Such was his faith in this new art of oratory, that, in a collection entitled '*Horæ Homileticæ*,' he gave to the world many hundred of these preparations, to be afterwards arrayed by other preachers in such fleshly integuments as might best cover their ghastliness. Deploable as the operation must have been in other hands than those of the inventor, he well knew how to make his dry bones live. They restrained the otherwise undisciplined ardour of his feelings, and corrected the tendency of that vital heat to disperse all solidity, and to dissolve all coherence of thought. His argumentation might occasionally irritate the understanding, his illustrations wound the taste, and his discourses provoke the smiles of his audience. But when, as was his wont, he insisted on fundamental truths, or enforced the great duties of life, or detected the treacheries of the heart, or traced the march of retributive justice, or caught and echoed the compassionate accents in which the Father of mercies addresses his erring children, it was a voice which penetrated and subdued the very soul. It was an eloquence which silenced criticism. It was instinct with a contagious intensity of belief. It sounded as the language of one to whom the mysteries and the futurities of which he spoke had been disclosed in actual vision, and so disclosed as to have dissipated every frivolous thought, and calmed every turbid emotion.

If the Church of England were not in bondage with her children to certain Acts of Parliament, she would long ere now have had a religious order of the Simeonites; and would have turned out of her catalogue some of her saints of equivocal character, and some of doubtful existence, to make room for St. Charles of Cambridge. What have Dunstan, and George of Cappadocia,

and Swithin the bishop, and Margaret the virgin, and Crispin the martyr, done for us, that they should elbow out a man who, through a long life, supplied from the resources of his own mind, to the youth of one of our universities, the theological education not otherwise to be obtained there; and who, from the resources of his own hereditary fortune, supplied the means of purchasing, in the most populous cities of England, from forty to fifty advowsons, that so the ecclesiastical patronage of those vital organs of our commonwealth might be ever thenceforward exercised in favour of zealous, devout, and *evangelical* ministers?

In that last ugly epithet lies all the mischief. ‘He is not a Jansenist, may it please your majesty, but merely an atheist,’ was once accepted as a sufficient excuse of a candidate for royal favour. He is not an evangelical clergyman, but merely a Parson Trulliber, was an equally successful apology with the dispensers of fame and promotion in the last age. Among them was the late Bishop Jebb, who, in his posthumous correspondence, indulges in sneers on the gospeller of Cambridge, as cold and as supercilious as if he had himself belonged to the Trulliber school of divinity; instead of being, as he was, an elegant inquirer into the curiosities of theological literature. So great a master of parallelisms and contrasts might have perceived how the splendour of his own mitre waned before that nobler episcopate to which Charles Simeon had been elevated, as in primitive times, by popular acclamation. His *diocese* embraced almost every city of his native land, and extended to many of the remote dependencies which then, as now, she held in subjection. In every ecclesiastical section of the Empire he could point to teachers who revered him as the guide of their youth, and the counsellor of their later years. In his frequent visitations of the churches of which he was the patron or the founder, love and honour waited on him. His infirmities disappeared, or were forgotten, in the majesty of a character animated from early youth to extreme old age by such pursuits as, we are taught to believe, are most in harmony with the Divine will, and most conducive to the happiness of mankind. He had passed his long life in the midst of censors, who wanted neither the disposition nor the power to inflict signal chastisement upon any offence which could be fastened on him; but he descended to the grave unassailed by any more formidable weapons than a thick and constant flight of harmless epigrams. He descended thither amidst the tears and the benedictions of the poor; and with such testimonies of esteem and attachment from the learned, as Cambridge had never before rendered even to the most illustrious of her sons; and there he was laid in that sure and certain hope on which he enabled an almost count-



less multitude to repose, amidst the wreck of this world's promises, and in the grasp of their last and most dreaded enemy.

What is a party, political or religious, without a Review? A bell swinging without a clapper. What is any society of men, if not recruited from the rising generation? A hive of neutral bees. Reviewless, Clapham had scarcely been known beyond her own Common. Youthless, her memory had never descended to the present age. At once rapt into future times, and thoughtful of her own, she addressed the world on the first day of each successive month through the columns of the 'Christian Observer;' and employed the pen of him on whom her hopes most fondly rested, to confer splendour and celebrity on pages not otherwise very alluring. To Mr. Macaulay was assigned the arduous post of Editor. He and his chief contributors enjoyed the advantage, permitted, alas! to how few of their tribe, of living in the same village, and meeting daily in the same walks or at the same table, and lightening, by common counsel, the cares of that feudal sovereignty. The most assiduous in doing suit and service to the Suzerain, was Henry Thornton. But he whose homage was most highly valued, and whose fealty was attested by the richest offerings, was the young, the much loved, and the much lamented John Bowdler.

He was the scion of a house singularly happy in the virtues and talents of its members; and was hailed by the unanimous acclamation of the whole of that circle of which Mr. Wilberforce was the centre, as a man of genius, piety, and learning, who, in the generation by which they were to be succeeded, would prosecute their own designs with powers far superior to theirs. A zeal too ardent to be entirely discreet, which gave to the world two posthumous volumes of his essays in verse and prose, has, unintentionally, refuted such traditions as had assigned to him a place among philosophers, or poets, or divines. And yet so rare were the component parts of his character, and so just their combination, that, but for his premature death, the bright auguries of his early days could hardly have failed of their accomplishment. His course of life was, indeed, uneventful. A school education, followed by the usual training for the bar; a brilliant, though brief success, closed by an untimely death, complete a biography which has been that of multitudes. But the interior life of John Bowdler, if it could be faithfully written, would be a record which none could read without reverence, and few without self-reproach.

To those who lived in habitual intercourse with him, it was evident that there dwelt on his mind a sense of self-dedication to some high and remote object; and that the pursuits, which are as ultimate ends to other men, were but as subservient means to him,

So intent was he on this design, as to appear incapable of fatigue, frail as were his bodily powers; and as to be unassailable by the spirit of levity, though fertile and copious in discourse almost to a fault. It is the testimony of one who for nearly twelve months divided with him the same narrow Study, that during the whole of that period he was never heard to utter an idle word, nor seen to pass an idle minute. He stood aloof from all common familiarities, yielding his affection to a very few, and, to the rest, a courtesy somewhat reserved and stately. His friends were not seldom reminded how awful goodness is, as they watched his severe self-discipline, and listened, not without some wandering wishes for a lighter strain, to discourses, didactic rather than conversational, in which he was ever soaring to heights, and wrestling with problems inaccessible to themselves. But they felt and loved the moral sublimity of a devotion so pure and so devout, to purposes the most exempt from selfishness. They were exulting in prospects which it appeared irrational to distrust, and were hailing him as the future architect of plans, to be executed or conceived only by minds like his, when, from the darkness which shrouds the councils of the Omniscient, went forth a decree, designed, as it might seem, at once to rebuke the presumption of mortal man, and to give him a new assurance of his immortality. It rent asunder ties as many and as dear as ever bound to this earth a soul ripe for translation to a higher sphere of duty; and was obeyed with an acquiescence as meek and cheerful as ever acknowledged the real presence of fatherly love under the severer forms of parental discipline. His profound conviction of the magnitude of the trust, and of the endowments confided to him, was really justified even when seemingly defeated by the event; for it showed that those powers had been destined for an early exercise in some field of service commensurate with the holy ardour by which he had been consumed. Of those who met round his grave, such as yet live are now in the wane of life; nor is it probable that, in their retrospect of many years, any one of them can recall a name more inseparably allied than that of John Bowdler to all that teaches the vanity of the hopes which terminate in this world, and the majesty of the hopes which extend beyond it.

And thus closes, though it be far from exhausted, our chronicle of the worthies of Clapham, of whom it may be said, as it was said of those of whom the world was not worthy, 'These all died in faith.' With but very few exceptions, they had all partaken largely of those sorrows which probe the inmost heart, and exercise its fortitude to the utmost. But sweet, and not less wise than sweet, is the song in which George Herbert teaches, that when the Creator

had bestowed every other gift on his new creature man, he reserved Rest to himself, that so the wearied heart in search of that last highest blessing, might cheerfully return to Him who made it. They died in the faith that for their descendants, at no remote period, was reserved an epoch glorious, though probably awful, beyond all former example. It was a belief derived from the intimations, as they understood them, of the prophets of Israel; but it was also gathered from sources which to many will seem better entitled to such confidence.

Revolving the great dramatic action of which this earth has been the scene, they perceived that it was made up of a protracted conflict between light and darkness. They saw that, on the one side, science and religion — on the other, war and superstition — had been the great agents on this wide theatre. They traced a general movement of events towards the final triumph of good over evil; but observed that this tendency was the result of an all-controlling Providence, which had almost invariably employed the bad passions of man as the reluctant instruments of the Divine mercy—sending forth a long succession of conquerors, barbarous or civilised, as missionaries of woe, to prepare the way for the heralds of peace. They saw, or thought they saw, this economy of things drawing to its close. Civilisation and, in name at least, Christianity, had at length possessed the far greater and nobler regions of the globe. Goths and Vandals were now the foremost amongst the nations. Even the Scythians had become members of a vast and potent monarchy. The Arabs had again taken refuge in their deserts. If Genghis or Timour should reappear, their power would be broken against the British empire of Hindostan. The mightiest of warriors had triumphed and had fallen; as if to prove how impregnable had become the barriers of the European world against such aggressions. On every side the same truth was proclaimed, that military subjugation was no longer to be the purifying chastisement of Christendom.

But the religion of Christ was conquering and to conquer. Courting and exulting in the light, it had made a strict alliance with philosophy — the only faith which could ever endure such an association. Amidst the imbecility and dotage of every other form of belief and worship, it alone flourished in perennial youth and indomitable vigour. If anything in futurity could be certain, it was the ultimate and not very remote dominion, over the whole earth, of the faith professed by every nation which retained either wisdom to investigate, or energy to act, or wealth to negotiate, or power to interpose in the questions which most deeply affect the entire race of man. If any duty was most especially incumbent

on those who exercised an influence in the national councils of England, it was that of contributing, as best they might, to speed onwards the approaching catastrophe of human affairs — the great consummation whence is to arise that new era with which creation travails and is in birth, which poets have sung and prophets foretold, and which shall justify to the world, and perhaps to other worlds, all that Christians believe of the sacrifice, surpassing thought and language, made for the deliverance and the exaltation of mankind.

When such thoughts as these force themselves on the German mind, it forthwith soars towards the unapproachable, and indites the unutterable. When the practical Englishman is the subject of them, he betakes himself to form societies, to collect subscriptions, to circulate books, to send forth teachers, to build platforms, and to afflict his neighbours by an eloquence of which one is tempted to wish that it were really unutterable. Such was the effect of these bright anticipations on the Clapham mind — an effect perceptible in many much better things, but, among the rest, in much equivocal oratory, and in at least one great effort of architecture.

Midway between the Abbey of Westminster and the Church of the Knights Templars, twin columns, emulating those of Hercules, fling their long shadows across the strait through which the far-resounding Strand pours the full current of human existence into the deep recesses of Exeter Hall. Borne on that impetuous tide, the mediterranean waters lift up their voice in a ceaseless swell of exulting or pathetic declamation. The changeful strain rises with the civilisation of Africa, or becomes plaintive over the wrongs of chinney-boys, or peals anathemas against the successors of Peter, or in rich diapason calls on the Protestant churches to awake and evangelise the world. No hard task to discover here the causes *corruptæ eloquentiæ*! If the shades of Lucian or of Butler hover near that elevated stage, how readily must they detect the anti-types of Peregrinus or of Ralpho! Criticise, for there is no lack of extravagance. Laugh, for there is no stint of affectation. Yet refuse not to believe, that, grotesque as her aspect may occasionally be, Exeter Hall has a history, a doctrine, and a prophecy, of no common significance.

Of that history, the preceding pages may afford some general intimation. The doctrine is that of an all-embracing, all-enduring charity — embracing every human interest, enduring much human infirmity. The prophecy is a higher and more arduous theme.

It is a prophetic age. We have Nominalists who, from the monosyllable ‘Church,’ educe a long line of shadowy forms, here-



after to arise and reign on Episcopal or patriarchal thrones — and Realists, who foresee the moral regeneration of the land by means of union workhouses, of emigrant ships, or of mechanics' institutes — and Mediævals, who promise the return of Astræa in the persons of Bede and Barnard *redivivi* — and Mr. Carlyle, who offers most eloquent vows for the reappearance of the heroes who are to set all things right — and profound interpreters of the Apocalypse, who discover the woes impending over England in chastisement of the impiety which moved Lord Melbourne to introduce Mr. Owen to the Queen of England.\* In the midst of all these predictions, Exeter Hall also prophesies. As to the events which are coming upon us, she adopts the theory of her Claphamic progenitor. In reducing that theory to practice, she is almost as much a Socialist as Mr. Owen himself. The moral regeneration which she foretells is to be brought about neither by church, by workhouse, by monk, by hero, nor by the purifying of St. James's. She believes in the continually decreasing power of individual, and the as constantly augmenting power of associated, minds. She looks on the age as characterised by a nearer approach than was ever known before to intellectual equality. But Exeter Hall is no croaker. Her temperament is as sanguine as her eloquence. Enumerate to her the long list of illustrious men who, while scarcely beyond their boyhood, had, at the commencement of this century, reached the highest eminence in every path to distinction; and point out to her the impossibility of selecting now, from those who have yet to complete their fortieth summer, any four names, the loss of which would be deplored by any art, or science, or calling in use amongst us; — and, in despite of Oxford, and Young England, and Mr. Carlyle, Exeter Hall makes answer — ‘So much the better. The sense of separate weakness is the secret of collective strength.’ Ours is the age of societies. For the redress of every oppression that is done under the sun, there is a public meeting. For the cure of every sorrow by which our land or our race can be visited, there are patrons, vice-presidents, and secretaries. For the diffusion of every blessing of which mankind can partake in common, there is a committee. That confederacy

\* One of the strange blemishes in a work very lately published by the Rev. E. B. Elliott, under the title of *Horæ Apocalypticæ* — a book of profound learning, singular ingenuity, and almost bewitching interest.

\*.\* The years which have elapsed since the preceding note was written, have ascertained that society at large has most cordially acknowledged the charm to which it refers — a fact which the Historian of the Clapham Sect must record with some exultation, as Mr. Elliott himself was bred up in that fraternity, and is one of the most eminent members of it in the second generation.

which, when pent up within the narrow limits of Clapham, jocose men invidiously called a 'Sect,' is now spreading through the habitable globe. The day is not distant when it will assume the form, and be hailed by the glorious title, of 'The Universal Church.'

Happy and animating hopes! Who would destroy them if he could? Long may they warm many an honest bosom, and quicken into activity many an otherwise sluggish temper! The true Claphamite will know how to separate the pure ore of truth from the dross of nonsense to which the prophets of his time give utterance. He will find sympathy for most, and indulgence for all, of the schemes of benevolence which surround him. Like the founders of his sect, he will rejoice in the progress and prospects of their cause; nor will he abandon his creed, however unpopular it may be made by the presumption, or however ridiculous by the follies, of some of the weaker brethren by whom it has been adopted.

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## THE HISTORIAN OF ENTHUSIASM.

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THE author of the 'Natural History of Enthusiasm' has published many books since the appearance of that from which he takes the title of his literary peerage. All of them have the indelible dye and impress of his own peculiar feelings, tastes, and fancies. No man is less chargeable with self-conceit, yet he can scarcely write a paragraph which does not bear the stamp of his own distinctive personality. In each of his volumes he has drawn his own portrait. He comes forth from his study in the character of a grave and learned teacher, but immediately becomes a familiar acquaintance, a member of any family circle into which he enters.

If the historian of Enthusiasm be as prudent as he is wise, he will bequeath to the world his own biography. If not, it will be compiled at hazard from the materials of which he has thus given to the world so large a store. Some future Daniel De Foe will put together 'Memoirs of a late celebrated Author, written by himself, and lately discovered among his papers.' Some Curl or Tonson will be found to vouch for the authenticity of the narrative. The hero of it will by that time have passed out of his present, or planetary abode, into the solar sphere, which his physical theory of a future state assigns as a future dwelling-place to those who have faithfully discharged the duties committed to them on earth. The organs of sight, which he is there to enjoy, will enable him to cast an occasional glance over the works and ways of this poor satellite, and to run over the whole literature of one of our terrestrial years as a sublunary reader glides through his newspaper. Even in that exalted state, his equanimity may perhaps fail him, as he deciphers the posthumous and mendacious story of his mundane parentage, education, pursuits, and employments.

The fabulist, however, will not be quite without excuse. It is a natural and an honest wish to know something about a writer, in whose company hour after hour has flown away so pleasantly. In the absence of truth, fiction may, however imperfectly, minister to

this want. It may delineate the author as he appears in his books, if not as he actually appeared among his associates. It will create opportunities for throwing out a judgment on those books with greater ease and freedom than in a more didactic method; and if the pseudo-biographer should happen to have a heart to love what is amiable, and to revere what is exalted, in his intellectual superiors, his romance would enable him to give expression to such feelings, without the embarrassment which besets a deliberate and formal eulogist.

Will it then be an unpardonable liberty, if, while our teacher still lives to adorn this lower world, and labours to improve it, we venture to take such a conjectural survey of his life as may be deduced from his writings, and such a survey of his writings as may be suggested by the apparent course and habits of his life? A temper so frank and kindly as his, will not very sternly rebuke the effrontery of assuming his person, and writing in his character, without the slightest personal acquaintance with himself and his affairs. But even the pain of such a rebuke would be tolerable, if he should be further provoked to substitute a true and genuine for the following imaginary autobiography.

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One of those seemingly motionless rivers which wind their way through the undulating surface of the south of England, sweeps round the outskirts of a long succession of buildings, half town, half village, where the meanness of the wattled cottages is relieved by the usual neighbourhood of structures of greater dignity—the moated grange—the mansion house, pierced by lines of high narrow windows—the square tower of the church struggling through a copse of elm trees—the grey parsonage, where the conservative rector meditates his daily newspaper and his weekly discourse—the barn-fashioned meeting-house, coeval with the accession of the House of Hanover—and near it the decent residence in which, since that auspicious era, have dwelt the successive pastors of that nonconformist flock, fanning a generous spirit of resistance to tyrants, now to be encountered only in imagination, or, in the records of times long since passed away.

In the close of the last century my father, a mild and venerable man, ruled his household in that modest though not unornamented abode; for there might be seen the solemn portraits of the original confessors of dissent, with many a relic commemorative of their sufferings and their worth. With these were contrasted the lighter and



curious embellishments which attest the presence of refined habits, female taste, and domestic concord. There also were drawn up in deep files the works and the biographies of the puritan divines, from Thomas Cartwright, the great antagonist of Whitgift, to Matthew Pool, who, in his *Synopsis Criticorum*, vindicated the claims of the ejected ministers to profound biblical learning. This veteran battalion was flanked by a company of lighter troops, drafted from the polite literature of a more frivolous age. Rich in these treasures, and in the happy family with whom he shared them, the good man would chide or smile away such clouds as chequered his habitual composure, when those little nameless courtesies, so pleasantly exchanged between equals, were declined by the dignified incumbent, or were accepted with elaborate condescension by the wealthy squire. Nor could the democratic sway of the ruling elders, supreme over the finances and the discipline of the chapel, draw from him an audible sigh, even when his delicate sense was writhing under wounds imperceptible to their coarser vision. He had deliberately made his choice, and was content to pay the accustomed penalties. Though denounced as a sectarian, he was at heart a Catholic, generous enough to feel that the insolence of some of his neighbours, and the vulgarity of others, were rather the accidents of their position than the vices of their character. Such vexations as these were beneath the regard of him, who maintained in the village the sacred cause for which martyrs had sacrificed life with all its enjoyments, and who designed to train up his son to the same honourable service, however ill-requited by the distinctions or by the riches of this transitory world.

That hope, however, was not to be fulfilled. I had been educated under the eye of my father, and had derived from him all my elementary acquaintance with ancient and modern languages, with theology, and with physical and moral science. I had early learnt to venerate his magnanimity and his devotion, and had derived from him his own thirst for knowledge. But his freedom of thought was an inalienable part of my intellectual patrimony. It was not in my nature to receive my opinions by inheritance. Whether they were right or wrong, they were my own; acquired, not by descent from any one, but by severe and protracted labours.

I have studied and drawn the characters of too many men, to have been a careless student of my own. I have invented too many physiological theories, not to have one at hand for the interpretation of whatever is peculiar in myself. My habitual introspection has made me more than half a convert to the doctrine of the duality of the human soul — the doctrine, that is, that each of the two lobes of the brain is inhabited by a distinct person — that

what we call a soliloquy, is nothing else than a dialogue between them — that the internal conflict between the new Adam and the old, is no metaphor or allegory, but a dry matter of fact — that a good or a wise man is one, in forming whose volitions the healthy side of the cranium is habitually triumphant — a knave or a fool, one in whom such volitions are for the most part formed on the opposite or diseased side.

By the aid of this hypothesis, I am able to explain the absence of all apparent affinity between the elements of which my nature was originally composed. It was as though the sensitive plant had been grafted on the Norwegian pine, or as if a Spartan soldier had been enthralled by the Idylls of Theocritus, or as if an anchorite had devoted himself to the imitation of the cosmetic Earl of Chesterfield. I shrank from the rude familiarities of the world, while impatient for the world's applause. I was a worshipper of hoar antiquity, and yet a libertine in the exercise of my own unfettered judgment. At one time I braced my nerves for controversy, and at another relaxed them in romantic dreams. I buried myself in solitude to fathom the mysteries of my own nature, and then revealed my discoveries in a style like that of the most fashionable Irish oratory. I grew up to manhood with a philanthropy as fastidious as it was ardent. My passion for books was alternately my delight and my torture. I narrowly escaped, in my youthful days, producing a poem, in which the styles of Juvenal and of Tibullus would have been reconciled with each other, as a kind of compromise between the robust and indignant inmate of one half of my brain, and the delicate and sentimental genius who possessed the other half.

In the midst of this cerebral war, the necessity which comes to all had come to me, of choosing a profession. The choice, indeed, seemed made to my hand. I had been a theologian from my boyhood, why not a teacher of Theology? The ecclesiastical polity of the Protestant dissenters possessed my earliest sympathies. My most mature convictions had embraced their religious system. Why not, then, mount the rostrum of my forefathers, and, like them, sustain the interests and inculcate the doctrines of the least prosperous of the churches of my native land? So, indeed, resolved the Self inhabiting one of the phrenological hemispheres within me. But the resolution was ultimately reversed by the superior energy of the Self who reigned over the opposite hemisphere.

I became an enthusiastic student of Divinity. My ardour grew with my early progress in those researches. 'Glorious science!' I exclaimed; 'the substratum of all sciences! the perfection of

human knowledge! the theme of the noblest intellects which have appeared among the children of men! the doctrine which has the happiness of mankind for its object, and which, even in its most abstruse and subtle forms, is still culminating towards universal love, and pointing to the abodes of the blessed! Alas! for the illusions of the library! Not more weary to the soul of the fainting traveller is the burning desert which the mirage had so lately adorned with verdant fields and limpid waters, than is many a barren waste of learning to the soul of him to whom, when viewed from some Pisgah of the imagination, it had appeared as a land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands.

In my theological inquiries, I had contemplated Christianity as a system of truths to be harmonised, as a code of obligations to be enforced, and as a succession of events to be developed. I commenced with an earnest and devout examination of the sacred writings, and could have rejoiced to rest for ever within those green pastures, and beside those waters of comfort. But I soon perceived that he who would derive from that hallowed source lights to guide the feet of others into the paths of life, must borrow the means of illuminating the inspired pages from the intellectual stores of uninspired men. Nothing more easy than to despise and neglect interpreters. Nothing less possible than to advance a step without interpretation. Divine knowledge presupposes human knowledge. Without logic, criticism, languages, and (in the widest sense of the word) history, the Bible is a sealed book; unless, indeed, it be opened by the aid of miracle. I was neither so indolent nor so presumptuous as to suppose that, by the mere bounty of nature, I possessed within myself all the necessary aids for the right understanding of Moses and of Isaiah, of Luke and of Paul. From those infallible teachers I passed, though not without many an anxious foreboding, to Eusebius and Fleury, to Augustin and Luther.

Launched on this troubled sea, how fearful were the disclosures forced upon me! If the annals of the world are but the records of crime and suffering, the chronicles of the Church have but little more alluring to reveal. How rapid the decline from the apostolic models—how early the growth of the meanest superstitions!—how swift the triumphs of spiritual despotism!—how intimate, even in the first ages, the alliance of the perverted Gospel with the logomachies of Grecian philosophy, and the profane mysteries of heathen worship, and the pollutions of pagan idolatry! And, as the turbid stream descended to lower eras, how sadly was I constrained to recognise a real though deplorable reformation even in the establishment of the Papacy, and a merited chastisement of the

foul crimes of Christendom by the sword of Mahommed and his followers, and by the hordes who, under the banners of Alaric and Attila, of Genseric and Odoacer, desolated the Latin Churches. I saw the long night of mediæval darkness yield at length to the dayspring from on high—a day too soon to be overcast by persecutions which the Cæsars would have abhorred, and by wars envenomed by the bitterest religious animosities, until the combatants at length laid down their arms—the Catholics to subside into a licentious infidelity, the Protestants to yield up the soul to Mammon, under the shelter of a lifeless orthodoxy, or of a merely human philosophy.

From contemplating the speculative errors and the practical misdeeds of the great multitude who, in former ages, had called and professed themselves Christians, I turned aside to survey the living societies who worship in that sacred name, not doubting that among them I should find the image of that New Jerusalem which it was permitted to the Prophet to see descending out of heaven. With this hope I first applied myself to the perusal of the works of their doctors. I did not, indeed, suppose that, in this modern theological literature, I should meet with any of those prodigies of industry and genius which had been produced by the fathers of the Anglican Church, and by the original Puritans. But I knew that I should discover in them the spirit of my own age; that all-controlling power, the dominion of which none may escape; and which, in my future calling, it would be inevitable that I should myself obey. To appreciate the theology of my own times, as impressed on the writings, or as breathing in the discourses, of my contemporaries, was therefore to see, by anticipation, the general tendency and workings of my own mind, when I should be subsequently numbered among the ministers of the everlasting Gospel.

It was no attractive prospect. In vain I looked around for any profound investigations into the interior sense, and into the genuine readings of the sacred text. I could meet with no interpreters of the connection between the recent developments of philosophy and science, and those progressive revelations of truth which have proceeded from God to man. The mines of Church History lay abandoned and unwrought. Nothing was undertaken, either to sustain the foundations or to delineate the symmetry of the vast fabric of Christian doctrine. Nor was any fresh ground broken up on the wide field of morals, to satisfy the demands of an age prolific in political and social changes, and with every such change giving birth to problems, hitherto unexplained, of national and of personal duty.

But while seeking in vain among my contemporaries for guides



or companions in such studies, I was constrained to encounter on every side the ill-favoured demon of religious, or rather of ecclesiastical controversy. When I would have scaled the heights of divine knowledge, I was called away to listen to some acrimonious dispute upon the rights, the symbols, and the government of Christian societies. From the celestial path which I desired to ascend, the din of such debates would continually drag me down, to witness and lament the mean jealousies, the petty passions, and the disingenuous artifices of earthly disputants.

Generations long since passed away, had transmitted to the generation to which I myself belonged, the interminable strife between the hierarchy of the Elizabethan and the democracy of the Puritan churches. The reluctant but inevitable attention which I bestowed on this hereditary feud, contributed to my belief in the duality of my own nature. War was declared within me between my judgment and my imagination. To the advocates of dissent I awarded the praise of maintaining the better cause, and of supporting it with the weightier reasons. To their antagonists I assigned the merit of conducting the war of words with the greater dignity, or, shall I say, with less repulsive querulousness. Sophistry and rancour can assume a not ungraceful veil, and put on many specious disguises, when associated with wealth and rank and other social distinctions. The asperities of my own party could boast of no such embellishments. The episcopal charge and the congregational pamphlet, emulated each other in bitterness and wrong. But in the courteous composure with which he inflicted pain, the advantage was ever on the side of the mitred belligerent. My conscience, indeed, condemned alike either form of malevolence; but my taste was far more grievously offended by the aspect it bore among the advocates of my own system. The ascendant power could affect to be compassionate and serene. The depressed body could not cease to be sore and acrimonious. A dissenter is seldom disposed, and is still more rarely permitted, to forget that he *is* a dissenter. The habitual sense of wrong is among the most unamiable and unalluring of the tempers with which man is afflicted.

Quitting the arena in which the polemics of the nineteenth century fought, I turned to the temples in which they assembled. Even there, alas! raged the conflict within me, or rather between the inmate of the one lobe of my brain, who judicially approved, and the inhabitant of the other lobe, who fastidiously disliked, the services in which I joined. In the assemblies of those among whom I proposed, at some future time, to minister, my thoughts would wander from the parsimonious simplicity of their sacred

edifices, from the obtrusive prominence of the leaders of their worship, and from their isolation in the great Christian commonwealth, to those august communions where the priesthoods of earth symbolise the hierarchies of heaven; where the successors, in unbroken lineage from the apostles, yet minister at their altars; where the creeds and the collects of the first confessors of the faith still rise as incense at those venerable shrines, and where alone can thrive those severe but unobtrusive graces which have an exact subordination of ranks for their indispensable basis. From the long drawn prayer, offered, in no blest cadence, beneath a roof raised as in utter scorn of architecture, fancy would allure me away to listen to the chant of some ancient liturgy, floating down the fretted aisles of some cruciform cathedral; and truth would extort from me the acknowledgment that the ascent of the human soul to the fountain of being, demanded other aids than are to be found among those who measure their approach to perfection by their distance from the models which, during fifteen centuries, had been revered throughout the universal church.

But as in the Primitive, so in the Protestant churches, the Pulpit was the stronghold and chief buttress of the faith; and to the pulpit I resolved to address my most assiduous attention, convinced that it would yet be found to maintain its primeval supremacy in detecting error, in enlarging the powers and the range of thought, in applying the divine oracles to all the purposes of human life, and in quickening every holy, and kind, and generous emotion. I had, indeed, neither the expectation nor the wish to hear that honeyed discourse which steeps the soul in self-forgetfulness. I remembered that Christianity was for the daily use of homely people. I knew that truth, when appearing among men in her severe and native majesty, would reject the trivial succour of rhetorical arts and of elaborated periods. 'From her chosen throne, and from the lips of her consecrated ministers, she will discourse' (I said) 'of the highest interests of time and of the glories of eternity, with an eloquence of which the mere words will be unheeded alike by the speaker and by the hearer. Her weapons of heavenly temper and resistless edge, must still be triumphant in their native energy, however feeble may be the arm which wields them. What, then, will not be their power, in hands diligently trained to their use, and instinct with that spiritual life in which alone we truly live?'

With such hopes I listened, and on the basis of such anticipations I judged. Honeyed discourse! elaborate periods! artificial eloquence! No, verily. The severest censor can prefer no such charge against the pulpits of the nineteenth century. Malignity

itself cannot accuse them of beguiling us by the witchcraft of genius. They stand altogether clear of the guilt of torpifying the disordered heart by the anodynes of wit or fancy. Abstruse and profound sophistries are not in the number of their offences. It is a mere calumny to accuse them of lulling the conscience to repose by any siren songs of imagination. If the bolts of divine truth are diverted from their aim, it is no longer by enticing words of man's wisdom. Divinity fills up her weekly hour by the grave and gentle excitement of an orthodox discourse, or by toiling through her narrow round of systematic dogmas, or by creeping along some low level of schoolboy morality, or by addressing the initiated in some mythic phraseology; but she has ceased to employ such tongues as those of Chrysostom and Bourdaloue. The sanctity of sacred things is lost in the familiar routine of sacred words. Religion has acquired a set of technical terms and conventional formulas; somnolent and sleep-compelling. Her pulpits bear the stamp and impress of an age, in which the art of writing has proved fatal to the power of thinking; when the desire to appropriate gracefully has superseded the ambition to originate profoundly; when the commercial spirit envelopes and strangles genius in its folds; when demigods and heroes have abandoned the field, and the holiest affections of the heart die away in silence, and the ripest fruits of the teeming mind drop ungathered into the reaper's bosom; an age of literary democracy and intellectual socialism, in which no bequests are made to remote posterities, and no structures are rising to command and break the universal mediocrity.

Such was the view of ancient and of modern Christianity disclosed to me by history and by my own observation. Unextinguished, indeed, by the mephitic vapours into which it has been plunged, that celestial lamp has never ceased to illuminate and to gladden many a lowly heart; but from those eminences on which it should have shone as a light to lighten the nations, it has emitted a radiance for the most part faint and flickering, and but rarely to be seen in its pure and native lustre. I had acquired a new and more earnest love and reverence for the sacred volume, not only for its own surpassing excellency, but for the contrast in which I found it to stand to the corruptions of former ages, and to the languor and feebleness of my own. Gladly would I have joined the great company of the preachers, if my lot had been thrown in those days when, in the strength of their divine mission, they overthrew the imperial idolatry; or in those times when an awakened world caught from their lips the cry of resistance to sacerdotal tyranny; or even in that later generation when, in my own land, an Erastian prelacy and their satellites fell down before them. But to swell

the chorus of formality; to 'do duty' in a listless congregation; to be the admired and the caressed of fashionable connoisseurs in divinity, or to wage a puny war with timid critics and delicate objectors!—it was not in my nature. Better far, I judged, to engage in some secular pursuit, where, freely measuring my strength with my competitors, I might, perhaps, rise to an elevation from which I could influence, if not control, the destinies of one of the great families of mankind.

For those of our well-educated youth who have neither the interest to become placemen, the genius to live by art, nor the capital required for commerce, it remains to minister to the sick in mind, in body, or in estate. My abandonment of the clerical life narrowed my choice to the two last of those pursuits. I might not improbably have been a physician, if the loathsome duties of the hospital and the dissecting-room could have been dispensed with. But that being impossible, I quitted my parental home for the remote and busy world in which the unjoyous science of special pleading is taught to the future aspirants to the dignities of the coif.

At this distance of time I never tread the flagstones of Fig-tree Court, in the Inner Temple, without feelings akin to those with which Gil Blas revisited the scene of the therapeutic labours in which he assisted the learned Dr. Sangrado. With what eagerness did I join in the onslaught on the purses and the reputations of mankind, under the guidance of the atrabilious skeleton, my tutor, whose keen eye twinkled from its deep socket, as it lit on a point of law, fatal to some unlucky litigant! To lie down at night with the conviction that, since day-break, I had been working harder than any other intellectual operative in London, was, in those times, among my luxuries. It was a sturdy and invigorating discipline. It taught me a logic of more practical utility than I could have acquired at Edinburgh or at Oxford. If the pleadings which I drew in those murky chambers, contributed (as is but too probable) to damage any honest man, they were at least of singular advantage to myself. They placed a curb on a vagrant imagination, and prepared me for controversies far more perilous than the interminable hostilities between John Doe and Richard Roe, in which I was then so zealous a partisan.

At the end of my novitiate, I took the gown, and, like other barristers, traversed Westminster Hall, swinging to and fro an empty bag. As my eye wandered from the plump, curly-headed cherubs on the roof, to the wan and troubled visages, enveloped in powdered wigs, below, I fancied that the architects of William Rufus, gifted with a second sight of the Aula-Regia of the Georgian



era, had carved those chubby angels in a good-humoured mockery of us all. For I soon learnt that in her glorious temple, the worship of Themis was conducted by a priesthood, whose spirit was but too accurately expressed by those corroded countenances. Incessantly eulogising the incorruptibility of the Bench, the honour of the Bar, and the respectability of the Attorneys, they were incessantly depreciating each individual of each of those goodly fellowships. Faint, indeed, was the resemblance between the original, or Mosaic Decalogue, and that 'various reading' of it, by which the professional morality of our *gens togata* was regulated. Apologies, which would have been torn to shreds by their acuteness, if preferred on behalf of any *Prisoner* at the bar, were admitted by the *Gentlemen* at the Bar, to justify their own acceptance of unearned and excessive fees, to vindicate the calling evil good and good evil, and to excuse the underhand game played by opposing advocates for their own ease and profit, at the expense of their helpless and ignorant clients. It was a life of rude familiarity, of bitter jealousy, and of ceaseless gossip. There was not one of the twelve judges, or of the leading counsel, whose character escaped daily dissection by half a score of those learned anatomists. Over the gate of Westminster Hall was the inscription, visible, at least, to my own eyes, 'All ye who enter here abandon modesty.' I found that it was well to possess virtue, talents, scholarship; well to know some little law; well to be eloquent; and better still to be closely connected with attorneys and their clients; but that the one thing needful was intrepid assurance, animated by constitutional vivacity. So gifted knavery, ignorance, and incapacity fattened. Without this gift, worth, learning, and genius starved. What the plain of Elis was to Greece, such is that venerable Hall to England; and its Pindar must sing of combatants who have rejoiced in the dust, the sweat, the strife, and the turmoil of the contests. His heroes must be painted with thick skins and hardy consciences, buoyant and fearless, prompt in resources, and unscrupulous in the use of them. No place or vocation there for men of pensive spirits, delicate nerves, and high-wrought sensibilities! When my mind at length opened to this great truth, I threw aside my unprofitable gown, repeating the old exclamation, 'What business have I at Rome—I cannot lie!'

I next turned for employment to the other ancient halls of Westminster. Topics of deep and stirring interest were then engaging the attention of parliament. These I diligently studied; and in due time I despatched to one of the most celebrated London newspapers a series of articles, designed to support the advocates of freedom, and to disperse the mists which had been purposely raised,

to darken and to distort their policy. My papers found acceptance, and their author encouragement. But that 'blest folio of four pages, which not even critics criticise,' existed only in the imagination of William Cowper. Never was an author's self-esteem exposed to a keener torture than that to which I was subjected. My editorial censor and I had nothing in common but the advocacy of the same political opinions. In everything else we were as far asunder as the poles. Yet, in half an hour, he would completely assimilate to his own style of thought and diction, any of my most elaborate performances. The substance remained, but the form was absolutely new. My facts, arguments, and conclusions reappeared in their original order, but all my candid acknowledgments and cautious qualifications had vanished away. My long and stately sentences had become terse and pungent. The periods which had fallen from my pen blushing, like so many moss roses, with the rich glow of humanity, now bristled with points like so many cactuses. Their graceful structure was broken up into epigram and antithesis. My grave censures had passed into stinging sarcasms, and some equivocal jest from 'Roderick Random' had thrust out an exquisite quotation which I had drawn from 'Comus.'

Smarting under this strange transmutation, though amazed at the facility and the skill with which it was executed, I sought and obtained an interview with my Procrustes. A transient access of the spirit of James Boswell has enabled me to record, for the benefit of others, the explanations which I then received from him. 'Adept as you are in many studies' (such was the complimentary commencement), 'you are but a tyro in the mystery of journalism. It is not a science, but a trade. Morals, philosophy, and patriotism are our raw materials, and must be got up to the taste of our customers. The worthy haberdasher at the next door, cannot watch the turns of the market more anxiously than we do. Fashion is the supreme arbiter with us as with him. From that tribunal neither he nor we have an appeal to any higher. What have Ephemera to say to Posterity? To satisfy the demands of fashion, we must both pass our wares through many successive hands — he, his ribands, we, our articles; the last hand, in either case, being that which gives to the commodity its gloss or bloom. You, my good sir, may be considered as the weaver, I as the hotpresser of the piecegoods we have on sale. You will excuse my freedom, but the fabric, when fresh from your loom, is either flattened down to the homiletical, or wrought up to the poetical, or clouded by the metaphysical tone of colouring. From my hand it receives the shape, the polish, and the tint, demanded by the coffee-room or the club. For every purpose, there is a time, a place, and a propriety. If either Locke or Milton

had edited a newspaper, he would have discussed the interests and the duties of mankind slashingly, biting, and comically. His own interest, and his duty to his proprietors, would have made him aim at a wide and immediate sale, by winning the suffrages of the idle, the frivolous, and the malignant multitude.'

'Enough,' I exclaimed, in imitation of Rasselas. 'Thou hast convinced me that no one who aspires to be a teacher of mankind, can ever be a newspaper editor.' 'It is indeed,' he replied, after Imlac, 'exceedingly difficult.' 'So difficult,' I rejoined, in the words of the Prince of Abyssinia, 'that I will have nothing more to do with his labours.' At once, and for ever, I abandoned all concern in this political haberdashery. The whole tribe of party writers, diurnal, and hebdomadal, now appeared to me in a new and a truer light. Like a flight of obscene birds, they overshadowed my path, polluting by their touch, and distorting by their dissonance, those researches into the state of the commonwealth, and the social duties of mankind, on which I desired to bestow a serene and unbiassed attention. My heart assured, and my observation convinced me, that both the leaders and the subalterns of contending factions, were far wiser and better men than they appeared in those clever, reckless, and uncharitable sketches, thrown off from day to day, by writers agitated by ceaseless excitement, condemned to mercenary toil, and excluded from the blessings of studious leisure, and of self-acquaintance.

'When injured Thales bids the town farewell,' the less he says or thinks of his wrongs the better. I quitted the great city with no injustice, real or imaginary, to resent. Fortune, indeed, had not smiled on my efforts; but neither had I wooed her smiles with much ardour or perseverance. Early in life, and with a mind unruffled by disappointment, I retired to scenes in which I might reasonably hope to reconcile my own tranquillity with the faithful discharge of active duties, at least as useful and as honourable as those which I had declined. There I resolved to labour in educating the young, and in instructing the adult of my own generation, not without some cheerful hope of audience from generations yet to be born. My pupils would not prevent my pursuing those literary designs which must have perished beneath the shade of the pulpit, the bar, or the daily journals. A school had not deterred the Head of the younger House of Bourbon from aspiring to the noblest of European Thrones, nor Samuel Johnson from claiming the moral dictatorship of England, nor Milton from scaling the Seventh Heaven.

In a rural retreat (the beauties of which nature has left to be detected by the assiduity, perhaps to be created by the imagination, of such as dwell there) I became a tutor, a husband, and a father.

The blessings shed over my path by the two last of those relations has, I am told, imparted to my writings a deeper glow of domestic tenderness than might have been expected, from the almost feminine reserve and delicacy which my critics have laid to my charge. If so, I am at least not intentionally criminal. An old bachelor, like the author of the 'Task,' or an old debauchee, to whom love and reverence are incongruous ideas, like the author of the 'Social Contract,' may, though for very different reasons, be induced to throw open the sanctuary of home to the gaze of the inquisitive; but I have neither their temptation nor their excuse for such loquacity. With those hallowed secrets of my heart, the stranger intermeddleth not, if I can help it.

My library is another matter. Any one is free to inspect, and, if it must be so, to envy it. Mine is no bibliomaniac collection. There is not a volume there which is not either in active service, or enjoying a well-earned repose as a faithful veteran. My teachers, my companions, my comforters, my playfellows, my fellow-labourers, and sometimes my antagonists, but always the cherished inmates of my house, there they stand, my much-loved books, eloquent or silent at my bidding, pleasant when I am pleased, melancholy when I am sad, animating when I am languid, leaving no sorrow unsoothed, no mood and temper of my mind unexpressed, no science uninterpreted, no art unadorned,—bringing me into hourly intercourse with all the noblest spirits who have sojourned in this world, and with those whom the Author of all worlds has inspired to give us some intimations of our origin, our destiny, and our hopes.

In that presence-chamber I reigned the monarch of many a well-peopled province, giving audience in turn to each of my many-tongued subjects, and exacting from them all a tribute at my pleasure. There might be seen, supreme in favour as in place, a venerable copy of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. A troop of tall, sad-coloured folios, the depositaries of the devout exercises and anxious self-searchings of the Puritan divines, was drawn up on shelves within reach of my outstretched arm. With but little more effort it could light on a tribe of more lofty discourse, bred in the sacred solitudes of Port Royal, yet redolent of the passion of their native land for an imposing and fanciful exterior. Honest George Latimer, with a long line of episcopal and episcopalian successors, held a position a little too prominent perhaps, yet due to their unrivalled worth and beauty, not less than to their aristocratic pretensions. But the main power of my state consisted in a race of ancient lineage and obsolete tongues, beginning with Clement, Hermas, and Irenæus, and so onward through the long



series of Greek and Latin fathers, ecclesiastical historians, acts of councils and of saints, decretals, missals, and liturgies, all in turn casting their transient lights and their deep shadows over the checkered fortunes of the Christian Church. Brought within the precincts of my wide dominion, Homer, Æschylus, Dante, Shakespeare, and the humble partakers of their inspiration, awaited at a greater distance my occasional summons. But perhaps in their reverend aspect might be perceived something which confessed that they were not among my habitual and chosen companions. Court favour here, as elsewhere, may have been a little too diffusive and capricious; and writers on physiology, astronomy, plants, insects, birds, and fishes, shared with metaphysicians, moralists, and the writers of civil history, the hours occasionally withdrawn by their ruler from more serious intercourse with his apostolic, patristic, papal, and reformed counsellors. In short, it was one of those chambers which he who can securely possess, quietly enjoy, and wisely use, may in sober truth pity the owners of Versailles and the Escorial.

There I conceived, and there I partly executed, the great labour of my literary life. Deep as was the shadow which my earlier inquiries threw over the progress of Christianity down the turbid stream of time, my more mature researches had but enhanced the gloom. I resolved, therefore, to become the author of a book, which, in its complete form, might perhaps be called ‘Ecclesiastical Nosology, or the Morbid Anatomy of the Church.’ It was designed ‘to exhibit at one view the principal forms of spurious religion.’ These consisted either first of the unavowed scepticism which believes nothing; or secondly, of the credulity which believes anything; or thirdly, of the enthusiasm which believes at the bidding of the imagination; or fourthly, of the fanaticism whose belief is the offspring of the morose and vindictive passions; or fifthly, of the spiritual despotism which exacts a belief (or the profession of a belief) determined not by conviction, but by authority; or sixthly, of the corruption of morals generated by each of these substitutes for the simplicity of the Christian faith. Here, then, was an analysis of my general subject, giving promise of six distinct volumes, which collectively were to form a comprehensive, though not a very Utopian, series of lectures on the perversions of the Gospel in a sinful and deluded world.

Machiavelli, Bossuet, and Montesquieu were to be my models. Like them, I hoped to throw broad masses of light on the principles by which the various synchronisms and sequences of human affairs may be cemented into one comprehensive whole. Like them, I proposed to extract philosophy from chronicles, and to

elevate annals into history. Like them, I resolved to relieve the dullness of the didactic style by narrative, but to render narrative entirely subordinate to the proof and illustration of doctrine. But neither 'The Prince,' 'The Universal History,' nor 'The Roman Greatness and Decay,' could supply me with a model of style. Our national taste (so at least I judged) demanded a prose more richly inlaid with ornament and cadences more various, intricate, and harmonious than theirs. I would learn from those great masters how to erect theories; but from Dugald Stewart how to construct paragraphs.

I commenced the execution of my scheme by my 'Natural History of Enthusiasm'—the work to which I owe my distinctive title in the world of letters. My success, if not splendid, was at least decisive and encouraging. I had not, on the whole, much right to complain of my critics. Some of them indeed turned my own guns upon me: purloining from one half of my book, the materials with which they assailed the other half; and with one voice they rebuked my diction as stately, redundant, and obscure. But they all assigned to me the praise of having imparted a definite shape to some momentous questions, which till then had been floating up and down in the form of loose popular discourse, and of having given a sound, if not a perfect, solution to the problems I had raised. My incognito contributed to my popularity; and in my retreat I enjoyed the double pleasure of revising several editions of my history, and of hearing of the various speculations which ascribed it to as many different pens. I perceived that fame was within my grasp, and I was convinced that it might be secured and extended by the honest art of promulgating salutary, though unwelcome, truths. Had I wanted motives for perseverance in my task, this conviction would have furnished them.

Accordingly, at no distant intervals, I committed to the press two more of the six main divisions of my 'Ecclesiastical Nosology.' But neither my 'Essay on Fanaticism,' nor my 'Treatise on Spiritual Despotism,' enjoyed the favour, or attracted the notice, which had been bestowed on their elder brother. Some indeed there were, who gave to the last a decided preference over the rest of the series. But it is impossible to deny that their reception was cold and indifferent, when compared with that of my first-born. This may be partly ascribed to the dropping of my vizor, and the consequent secession of the mere mystery hunters, and partly, perhaps, to the public ear being cloyed by a style too rhythmical and inflated; but chiefly (I think) to an error in my original design, which was brought but too distinctly to light by this repeated and frequent recurrence to it.

I discovered that my undertaking was too austere, and my colours too dark to satisfy the popular taste. Three copious volumes of grave censure, relieved by no digressions into gayer or more animating topics, was, I found, more than mortal monitor might hazard, and more than offending mortals would endure. I reflected, though not till too late, that all the masters of the objuratory art had been accustomed to medicate their reproofs with various condiments of verse, or wit, or pleasantry, or pathos. I now remembered that the satirists themselves had been but flatterers in disguise, by indirectly ascribing to those whom they addressed, their own abhorrence (genuine or assumed) of the crimes which they denounced; that even Juvenal supposes the moral sentiment of his readers to be virtuous and uncontaminated, and that each of them probably appropriated the fierce invective of the poet to his neighbour, the implied compliment to himself. It now, also, occurred to me, that some honest and respectable prejudices might have been wounded by the gloom which my disquisitions threw over the general character of the Christian world; and that many simple hearts might have thought themselves conducted, under my guidance, to the brink of a fearful inference, to be avoided only by the desertion of their guide. Such reflections came too late to obviate the fundamental error of my design, but soon enough to prevent the completion of it. My 'Morbidity of Spurious Religion' remains an unfinished fragment.

I was disappointed, but not discouraged. The impulse which urged me to participate in the great debates of my age and country, was too powerful to be thwarted or restrained. My faith in myself, in the truths I sought to inculcate, and in the support from on high, of which the devoted advocates of truth are assured, never failed me; and I contemplated from my retreat, with unabated interest, the great intellectual movements of the world from which I had withdrawn. They separated, as it seemed to me, into two currents, moving in opposite directions, and with conflicting purposes.

The tendency of the first was to degrade man's noblest works and faculties into toys for the pastime of a luxurious generation — to convert poetry into a mere vehicle for novels in rhyme — history into a quarry for romance — the drama into an apology for scene-painters, songsters, and buffoons — philosophy into an embellishment of periodical garrulities — and theology itself into the art of rescuing certain sabbatical hours from dulness, or from sleep. The rival stream took its rise from Castalian fountains. To Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth might justly be given the title of fathers of their country, because in their

minds first germinated the ideas which determined the character of no insignificant part of the nation to which they belonged. They taught some two or three of their disciples to think. They taught to a vast multitude the use of a phraseology which has become an admirable counterfeit and substitute for thought — a style in which the colloquial freedoms of the stage are employed to set off the apophthegmatic sententiousness of Burke, the shapeless abstractions of the Schlegels, and the traditional doctrines and maxims of the Vatican. In this motley dialect, men of large pretensions to learning laid claim to the high office of the teachers and benefactors of the world; while they contemptuously denounced the effeminate spirit which, like Cleopatra dissolving her pearls in her goblet, was desecrating all art and human knowledge into the recreation of an idle hour, and employing divine knowledge to feed a corrupt, effete, and emasculate rhetoric.

All my sympathies were at first with those who thus contended against the debasement of learning to frivolous and unworthy ends; even though they themselves were sublimating whatever they knew or thought into a gaseous poetry. But the passage proved to be but short from these exercises of the imagination to some of its most fatal disorders. The theological poets and the poetical theologians of Oxford, were continually approaching nearer to a communion with the theatrical ritual of Rome, to the adoration of her demigods, and to the adoption of her creeds. From the dark, though inspired oracles at the Lakes, they had learnt to tread that enchanted ground on which everything, however homely, becomes significant of the holiest things. From this poetical worship of nature in her humblest forms, they had advanced towards the actual worship of the superhuman objects which those forms seemed to them to symbolise. A soaring enthusiasm for the beautiful had proved the entrance into a grovelling superstition.

My spirit was stirred within me as I watched this growing decline from the faith of the Reformers. Nonconformist as I was, the Church of England was scarcely more dear to the most zealous of her sons than to me. Keen as was my perception of her errors, I regarded her not only as the indispensable support, but as the indispensable head, of the great Protestant league of Christendom — as the one body possessing the cohesion, the stability, the learning, the temporal power, and the long tradition of illustrious names which could be opposed to the similar pretensions of the great Roman confederacy. I bethought me, that in her defence I might myself go forth to the combat with the Goliaths of Oxford, with the greater advantage, because without the incumbrance of cope, or gown or surplice. I was beyond the reach of those arguments



*ad homines*, by which such as wore them were but too successfully assailed. Acknowledging no canon but that of Scripture, nor any creeds but such as could be deduced from that source, nor any saint whose apotheosis is not there recorded, I was free to reject all appeals to ancient Christianity and to modern liturgies, and to esteem as a liar, every man whose teaching was opposed to the truth of God.

Notwithstanding my antipathy to periodical literature, the tactics of the enemy and the habits of the times compelled me to adopt that mode of publication. Thus I became the author of a series of Tracts, which opened with a lecture to the Ultra-Protestants, who, in their zeal for 'the Bible only,' repudiate the authority of the Primitive Church, even as to matters of fact which passed under their eyes, and even as to the meaning of words which were vernacular in their mouths. I next proceeded to show that superstition, priestcraft, and theosophy, had, like deadly creepers, stunted the early growth, and poisoned the first fruits of that tree which, springing as from a grain of mustard seed, was destined to cast forth her branches to the ends of the earth — that the Mariolatry of Tertullian had been quite as extravagant as that of Bernard, — that the virgins of the age of Cyprian had rivalled, in licentiousness, the nuns of the age of Dominic, — that the Doctors of the first four centuries had substituted a Gnostic Deity at war with matter, for the Deity of the Gospels at war only with sin, — that Chrysostom, Basil, and the two Gregories, in the East, and Ambrose in the West, had either excluded, from their teaching and from their creeds, the first great principle of the Gospel, or had exhibited it in an order and position the very reverse of that which is assigned to it by the inspired writers, — that virginity, fasting, and almsgiving had been placed by patristic divinity, on the thrones erected by Paul to Faith, and Hope, and Charity, — that with no difference but that of names, the same dæmons were worshipped in the Pagan and in the Christian temples of the fourth century, — that many of the most illustrious among the anchorites of the East, and the Celibates of the West, had better merited cells in some House of Correction, than niches in the gallery of ecclesiastical heroes, — that the greatest Saints and Doctors of that age had sanctioned pious frauds, which, in our own times, would have conducted their authors to the treadmill, — that Ambrose had been an impostor, Chrysostom the promoter of a cheat, and Augustin a teacher of what he must have known to be false, — that Popery had been a reformation of ancient Christianity, — that the theology of Mahommed and his caliphs had been superior to that which they overthrew at Antioch and Alexandria, — and that Attila was an

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avenger of crimes rivalling those of the Egyptian mysteries. I next advanced to the proof of the Protestantism of the Anglican Church, and showed how in her liturgies, her articles, and her homilies, she had raised her voice against the errors and corruptions, not of Rome merely, but of the Churches which twice sent their bishops to hold a general synod at Nicaea; and, warming with my own movement, I closed my assault on the religion of the third and fourth centuries, by an unsparing exposure of the inconsistencies and the blunders committed by Ridley, and Jewell, and Bucer, in their awkward attempts to shelter their allegiance to the Apostles by an appeal, alike unsuccessful and unfair, to the authority of the Fathers.

Of all the labours of my literary life, this was the most arduous and the most immediately effective; as it was certainly not the least popular. But a writer will seldom be left by his critics in ignorance of such of his faults as lie on the surface. I was charged with some few oversights in my translations from my Greek originals; and admonished that I had failed in the reverence due to names had in honour by fifty generations; and warned, that truth would admit, and that justice required, some mitigation of my censures on the morals of their contemporaries. Censors of another class distinguished between the style of my successive numbers, condemning the earlier as turgid and diffuse, and ascribing only to the latter the freedom and vivacity requisite in controversial writing. They imputed to me a disregard of method and of logical sequence in the evolution of my argument; and taunted me with having paid the penalty of the periodical literature I had so warmly condemned, by myself sacrificing to immediate effect, materials and researches which, with greater leisure, and in a more tranquil mood, I might have wrought (so they were pleased to add) into a comprehensive and enduring commentary on the works, the doctrines, and the lives of the Fathers of the first five centuries.

Whatever may have been the fairness of these strictures on my 'Ancient Christianity,' it was honoured by one result more than sufficient to countervail them all. The great leader of the hostile forces undertook to refute my accusations against Ambrose, and for that purpose republished some chapters of the 'Ecclesiastical History of Fleury,' preceded by an 'Essay on Miracles' from his own pen. To vindicate the honesty and the prodigies of the Saints, he was fain to rely on the alleged antecedent probability that some such marvels as those ascribed to Ambrose would be performed by some such person, at some such time, and in some such manner, and was driven to assert that the vast majority of the mighty works recorded in the Old Testament and the New, must stand or fall on

the same narrow basis. For the first time in my life I was able to enter into the exultation with which Samuel Johnson had exclaimed, 'Sir, I reduced him to whistle.' After a brief interval, the same antagonist bore a yet more conclusive testimony to the truths I had inculcated. In his new character of a Roman Catholic he inculcated them himself! He published an octavo volume to verify all I had said of the wide interval between the patristic and the apostolic doctrine, and attempted to deduce from the dogmas of Rome a solution of the problem I had proposed, of finding a law by which developments of primitive truths into new forms might be distinguished from each other as genuine and as false. A treacherous ally, thus converted into an avowed enemy, ceased to be formidable. I gladly laid down my controversial pen, and turned aside, from the exhausted debates with the Church of Rome, to pursuits far better suited to my temper, and more grateful to my taste.

By the benignity of a kind Providence I lived like the patriarchs of old, surrounded by the young, and especially by my own offspring. Alas! for the Doctors placed by irrevocable vows beyond the reach of those fountains of love and of wisdom. My pupils and my children were my habitual study, as well as the daily joy and interest of my existence. For their instruction or delight, I threw off numberless pages in print or manuscript, for which, beyond that gay circle, I sought neither eulogist nor reader; though, for the benefit of other schools and nurseries, I ultimately published one of them — 'An English Version of Herodotus,' with such omissions only as are needed to make his reception in a Christian household as decorous as it must ever be cordial. Thus my second childhood was separated by no long interval from my first; for there I was, the eldest, the gravest, and the least agile, indeed, of the jocund group, but hardly less captivated than they were by the lessons and the frolic of the passing hour. And when my little ones were hushed into repose, the incidents of their bright and busy lives would adjust themselves in my mind in the form of a connected narrative, compared with which I found the delightful tales of the great Father of History himself uninteresting. 'Feed my lambs,' was nearly the latest injunction which fell from the lips of Him of whom the whole family both in heaven and earth is named. If obedience to his more arduous precepts, in the spirit of a stern self-denial, is never unrewarded, even in this life, by peace and joy, how exuberant the springs of happiness opened to those on whom is laid a law, to which the first and deepest instincts of their nature are continually responsive!

With me, by this time, to meditate was to write. If I could

have so far yielded to the levities of the day, or to its coarseness, as to have laid bare the recesses of my home to the public gaze, there were before me materials for a domestic novel, to which a touch far inferior to that of Rousseau, might have imparted an interest far superior to that of his *Emilius*. But I could just as soon have delivered over my body as an *anatomie vivante* to the surgeons for dissection. Reversing the ordinary method of conveying moral precepts under the veil of narrative, I told my tale in the form of precepts, leaving my readers to resolve as they might, the admonitions I laid before them into the very scenes which, as I wrote, were lying before myself — the quiet English country house, the affectionate and not unlearned parents, the group of boys and girls, gay, docile, and intelligent, each exhibiting some well-discriminated mental powers, to the slow though complete development of which, the pursuits of each were steadily and patiently directed.

My book on 'Home Education,' was received rather with cordiality by the few than with applause from the many. My self-constituted judges were resolved to believe that I had been surveying not the very England in which we live, but the Utopia in which Sir Thomas More once sojourned. Admitting that, beneath the tranquil shelter of such a house as I had unconsciously sketched, many a youth and many a maid might have been trained to adorn the land which gave them birth, they refused to admit the existence of such another abode north or south of Trent, except on the authority of a report to be first made to that effect by a commission of married men of six years' standing, at the least. What with managing constituents and turnpike trusts, writing sermons and prescriptions, meeting the hounds to-day and the Quarter Sessions to-morrow, an English country gentleman, whether clerical or laic, who should undertake the late development of the 'ideality,' and the 'conceptive faculty,' and the 'sense of analogy' of his children, though he should address himself to the 'intuitive faculties' alone, and those 'gently stimulated by pleasurable emotions,' would, in a myriad of cases to one (such were the assertions and such the slighting quotations of my critics), end in something very different from the promised result of 'putting their minds into a condition of intellectual opulence.' Here and there (they added) may, perhaps, be found such an Eden as the author of 'Home Education' has inhabited and described; where, exempt from the cares of earth, and in habitual communion with the Father of Lights, parents train their offspring 'to apprehend truth, to impart truth, and to discover truth.' But lovely as the scene might be, and profound as was the paternal love with which it was drawn (I am still quoting my



censors), the Belvidere Apollo did not contrast more forcibly with an honest sportsman of our times, nor was the Godfrey of Tasso more unlike an officer of her Majesty's Life Guards, than did the rural philosopher, who had indited my book, differ from the ten thousand respectable English gentlemen over whose country mansions fertile vines have crept, and whose tables are thickly set with olive branches.

Such is criticism ! I have reflected much ; I have written much ; and much have I been taken to task for my writings. But a critic, in the current acceptation of that much abused term, I have never been. Nor, if I have an enemy, do I wish for him any heavier doom than that he should be inrolled and serve among that supercilious brotherhood, until he shall have learnt justly to appreciate his own position, and his own real importance, in the world of letters.

I gradually became review-proof ; and, with very little concern for what the month or the quarter might bring forth in that way, I gave myself up to a series of contemplations on topics which had caught without arresting my notice, while I was engaged on my historical surveys, and in my polemical inquiries. Under the enigmatical title of ' Saturday Evening,' I sketched, in a series of essays, the hopes and prospects of the Christian Church, her lapse from original purity, the fellowship of her members with each other, and their isolation as individuals, the limits of revealed knowledge, the dissolution of our nature, and its perpetuity, and the modes of our future existence. It was not in my nature to acquiesce tamely in any of the dogmatic systems of theology, definite as they were, and, therefore, cold, sterile, and earth-born. I aspired to reach that upper region which the pure light visits, and from which alone it is reflected in all its purity. I dared to propose to myself problems of which Butler might have surmised the solution ; and of which Milton, when shut out from the sight of material things, might have discerned and depicted the latent glories. I attempted to scale eminences in the presence of which the mightiest become conscious of their weakness, and the boldest imagination is taught the penury of its resources. To throw some conjectural, unsteady, and precarious light on such themes, ultimately became the limit of my ambition and of my hopes. Yet I could not altogether abstain from the endeavour to climb heights and to penetrate depths undreamt of in our popular theology, and I applied myself, with whatever success, to themes which, when examined with reverence and freedom of thought, can never be unfruitful ; though the fruits may often be unripe, and, to the great majority, distasteful.

Wise men read books that they may learn to read themselves,

and for this purpose not seldom quit their libraries for the open air. The heath, the forest, or the river side is the true academy. There, with no intrusive neighbour to dissipate his thoughts, and with no importunate volume to chain them down, the student casts them into such forms of soliloquy or dialogue, of verse or prose, as best suits the humour of the passing time. This peripatetic discipline is best observed under the cover of an angling rod, or a gun; for then may not the vicar or the major, without an evident breach of privilege, detain you on the county-rate question; nor can the gentler voice of wife or daughter upbraid you with the sad list of the visits you have received and neglected to return. Besides, your country philosopher is apt to flatter himself that, in hooking a trout, or flushing a pheasant, his eye is as true and his hand as steady as those of the squire; and from this weakness I was not altogether exempt. Emerging from my library as one resolved to bring home some score head of game, my stout purposes would gradually die away, as I reached the brook, whose windings were oddly associated in my mind with theories with which the world was one day to be enlightened, and with half-conceived sections of essays yet to be written.

There is a great want of a treatise on the choice, the uses, and the treatment of hobby-horses. It would form a sort of connecting link between the libraries of useful and of entertaining knowledge. Scarcely a man (the made-up and artificial man alone excepted) who could not be laid under contribution for such a work. I could myself furnish a whole chapter. When it was not field day with me, and I had no exercises in divinity to perform, I descended from the great horse and ambled about, to my heart's content, on a favourite pad, which, however, it was my whim to dress in the housings of my tall charger, and to train to the same paces. In leisure hours, my appointed duty was to extract from Church History its pith and marrow; my habitual recreation to construct schemes of physiology. I emulated the zeal with which 'my Uncle Toby' threw up his entrenchments, and Mr. Shandy his theories. My 'Home Education' was founded on a diligent survey of the formation of the brain. My solitary walks gave birth to a system in which was exhibited the future condition of man, when he shall be disencumbered of those viscous and muscular integuments which, in his present state, serve as a kind of sheath to protect the sentient soul within, from the intensities of delight or pain to which, without such a shelter, it would be exposed. Dwelling habitually on those scenes beyond the confines of earth, I became at last the possessor of a scheme, complete and coherent in all its parts, of that glorious futurity to which, in their cravings for immortal bliss, all

men look forward, but which to nearly all presents itself only in 'faint, dim, shapeless, and unalluring outline.

I did not, however, make this attempt to burst through the barriers of time and space, without first tracing the steps of those who had preceded me in this daring adventure. First, and before all, I reverently consulted the inspired writers, among whose prerogatives it is not the least that, into whatever region of thought they pass, sound sense is still the attendant minister by whose aid they invariably ascend a region far beyond the morbid dreams of an excited fancy. Of such dreams, none had a firmer hold on the ancient sages of Greece and Italy, than the notion that, after death, man was to pass into a state of pure incorporeity, 'the naked ascending to the naked,' to be absorbed into the great mundane soul. In opposition to this dogma, the New Testament places human felicity, on either side of the grave, in the union of sound mind with a sound body. The same creed, as Irenæus and Tertullian testify, was held by their immediate successors. Origen advanced further, and taught that to exist wholly detached and separate from matter, is the incommunicable attribute of Deity — that the 'spiritual body' of St. Paul is identical with the 'luciform body' of Plato — and that any created and subordinate mind destitute of such a covering, and of such an instrument, must be cut off from all commerce with things external, and degenerate into a mere contemplative, insulated, and inert entity.

With these earlier fathers of the Church, I found the later of that venerable order in unbroken harmony. In their copious inquiries into the nature of good and bad dæmons, they assign, indeed, to the angelic host the nearest possible resemblance, and to the evil spirits the greatest possible dissimilarity, to the 'defecated intelligences' of the schoolmen; and represent the first as impassive to sensual pleasures, and the others as inhaling, with an unholy relish, the savoury fumes of the heathen sacrifices; but they exhibit both, whether angels or devils, as still clad with some material integument, though it be subtilised to an indefinite and imponderable tenuity. From the same erudite doctors, and especially from St. Augustine, I learnt what is the manner in which the spiritual inhabitants of these ethereal vehicles hold intercourse with each other, and what are the shapes in which their presence is made manifest to those exquisite organs of sensation to which alone they are perceptible.

After thus mastering the discoveries of the patristic voyagers into the regions of the blessed, I turned to the other guides across that pathless ocean. One contemptuous glance at the Koran, and the Paradise it reveals, was sufficient. I paused a while to con-

temple the dark Homeric Hades peopled by the victims of the inexorable fate with which they had wrestled so bravely on earth. Over the Elysian fields of Virgil I saw satiety reigning in eternal and undisputed sway, and thought that the great poet had made an advantageous exchange, when, at the distance of thirteen centuries, he took up his abode on the outskirts of the Inferno, and made an occasional pilgrimage through its gloomy mansions. The awful magician whom he conducted to those abodes of woe, lost (as it seemed to me) much of his own inspiration when, consigned to the guidance of Beatrice, he traversed the seven heavens in her company, and listened, first in the Sun, and then in the Planet Jupiter, to the lectures of St. Thomas, and to the metaphysical comments on the mystery of the Divine decrees, delivered by the saints, congregated into the form of a celestial eagle.

From the poets I passed to the philosophers. In Cudworth and Brucker, I found a perfect analysis and interpretation of the doctrines of the schools, both ancient and modern, respecting the state of departed spirits; but the latitudinarian was as cold as the creed he professed, and the commentator as dry as the parchments among which he lived. I at length fell in with two volumes of far less pretensions than theirs, in which the post-sepulchral condition of man is delineated with an eloquence, a tenderness, and a warmth of heart worthy of such a theme. One of them was the treatise of Thomas Burnett, *De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium*. Burnett, it may be supposed, best knew his own strength and weakness, and therefore judged rightly in choosing scientific subjects, and in discussing them in a dead language; but to the world at large, it must ever remain a mystery why he subjected to such fetters a mind which, as by some necessity of its nature, threw a gorgeous veil of impassioned poetry over every topic which it touched. My other conductor across the abyss which separates the living from the dead, was Abraham Tucker, the author of the 'Light of Nature,' a man unrivalled in the power of illustrating the obscure by the familiar, and blest with a mind so habitually gay, benevolent, and serene, that every page he has written is an undesigned and captivating reflection of his own happy temperament. I gladly soared away with him, in one of his atomic vehicles, to that boundless expanse in which he met the departed worthies of this world, shooting so pleasantly from star to star, conversing without the clog of words, putting forth at their will, organs with which to feel or to perceive all exterior objects, or retiring for meditation into a solitude which, when those organs were retracted, was utterly impregnable by any invader from without.

At the close of a winter's evening which had been passed in such



company, and with such books, I drew my chair to my fire-side, and yielded myself passively to the incursion of the trains of thought to which my employment had given birth. At first they sustained themselves (like creepers hanging on a trellis-work) by the whimsical relations which they spontaneously formed with the dancing flames before me, and with the dark rocks, the illuminated caves, and the glowing pinnacles on which I was gazing. In the microcosm which blazed on my hearth, it was given to me to discover the present abodes of the former generations of mankind, and to watch them as they discharged the various offices which are there reserved for the departed. But, ere long, I ceased to see those mimic mountains of man's future dwelling-place, and to explore the interminable vistas of light and shade by which they were perforated, or to hear the flapping of the fiery pennons which rose above their summits; for, while I was thus ruminating on the occupations of those who had passed through the gates of death, sleep had closed her portals on myself.

The time (so it seemed to me) had arrived at which I was to join the solemn troops and bright societies who people the eternal world. One universal bewilderment of thought, one passing agony, and all was still. I had emerged from the confines of life, and yet I lived. Time, place, and sensation were extinct. Memory had lost her office, and the activity of my reasoning powers was suspended. Apart from every other being, and entombed in the solitude of my own nature, all my faculties were absorbed and concentrated in one intense perception of self-consciousness. Before me lay expanded, as in a vast panorama, the entire course of my mortal life. I was at once the actor and the spectator of the whole eventful scene; every thought as distinct, every word as articulate, and every incident as fresh as at the moment of their birth. The enigmas of my existence were solved. That material and intellectual mechanism of which, for threescore years and ten, I had been the subject, was laid bare, with all the mutual dependencies of the countless events, great and trivial, of my sublunary days. Grasping, at length, the threads of that vast labyrinth, I perceived that they had all been woven by the same Divine Artificer. At each step of the way by which I had come, I now traced the intervention of an ever-watchful Providence. Complicated and perplexing as the condition of human life had formerly appeared to me, I at length discovered the great ultimate object to which each movement of that intricate apparatus had been designed to minister. I saw that the whole had been one harmonious and comprehensive scheme for purifying the affections of my nature, and invigorating them for nobler and more arduous exercises. I had gone down to Hades, and Deity was

there. On earth His existence had been demonstrated by reasoning. Here it was felt by a consciousness intuitive and irresistible. A prisoner in the flesh, I had been wont to adore the majesty of the Creator. A disembodied spirit, I was awake to the conviction that He exists as the perennial source of happiness, which, concentrated in His own nature, is thence diffused throughout the universe, although in degrees immeasurably distant from each other, and according to laws unsearchable by any finite understanding. Thus imbibing knowledge of myself and of Deity, and alive only to the emotions inspired by this ever-present spectacle, I became the passive recipient of influences instinct with a delight so tranquil, and with a peace so unbroken, that weariness, satiety, and the desire for change appeared to have departed from me for ever.

Change, however, awaited me. So slight and imperfect was the alliance between my disembodied spirit and the world of matter, that, destitute of all sensation, I had lost all measure of time, and knew not whether ages had revolved, or but a moment had passed away during my isolated state of being. Heir to ten thousand infirmities, the body I had tenanted on earth had returned to the dust, there to be dissolved and recompoundd into other forms and new substances. Yet the seminal principle of that mortal frame had adhered to me; and at the appointed season there brooded over it from on high a reproductive and plastic influence. Fearfully and wonderfully as I had been made when a denizen of the world, the chemical affinities, and the complex organisation of my animal structure, had borne the impress of decay, of a transitory state, and of powers restricted in their free exercise. Passing all comprehension as had been the wisdom with which it was adapted to the purposes of my sublunary being, those purposes had been ephemeral, and circumscribed within precincts which now seemed to me scarcely wider than those within which the emmet plies her daily task. In the career which was now opening to me, I required a far different instrumentality to give scope to my new faculties, and to accomplish the ends to which I had learned to aspire. Emancipated from the petty cares and the mean pursuits in which, during the period of my humanity, I had been immersed, I now inhabited and informed a spiritual body, not dissimilar in outward semblance to that which I had bequeathed to the worms, but uniform in its texture, homogeneous in every part, and drawn from elements which were blended together into one simple, pure, and uncompoundd whole. Into such perfect unison had my mental and my corporeal nature been drawn, that it was not without difficulty I admitted the belief that I was once again clothed with a material integument. Experience was soon to con-

vince me that such an association was indispensable to the use and to the enlargement of my intellectual and moral powers.

Emerging from the region of separate spirits into my next scene of activity and social intercourse, I found myself an inhabitant of the great luminary, around which Mercury and his more distant satellites eternally revolve. In all their unmitigated radiance were floating around me those effulgent beams of light and heat which so faintly visit the obscure and distant planets. Everlasting day, the intense glories of an endless summer-noon, rested on the numbers without number of intelligent and sentient creatures who shared with me my new abode. Incorruptible, exempt from lassitude, and undesirous of repose, they imbibed energy from rays which, in the twinkling of an eye, would have dissipated into thin vapour the world and all that it inherits. On that opaque globe, the principles which sustain, and those which destroy life had been engaged within me in a constant but unequal conflict. The quickening spirit on earth, though continually recruited by rest and sleep, had at length yielded to the still-recurring assaults of her more potent adversaries. Here the vital powers had no foes to encounter, and demanded no respite from their ceaseless occupation. In the world below, from man the universal sovereign, to the animalculæ who people a drop of turbid water, I had seen all animated things sustaining themselves by the mutual extermination of each other. In the solar sphere I found all pursuing their appointed course of duty or enjoyment, in immortal youth and undecaying vigour. Death had found no entrance; life demanded no renewal.

I am anticipating the results of the observations which I gradually learned to make of the difference between solar and planetary existence; for on my first entrance into this untried state of being, my thoughts were long riveted to the change which I had myself undergone. While incarcerated in my tenement of clay, I had given law to my nerves, muscles, and tendons; but they had in turn imposed restraints on me against which it had been vain to struggle. My corporeal mechanism had moved in prompt obedience to each successive mandate of my mind; but so fragile were the materials of which it was wrought, that, yielding to inexorable necessity, my will had repressed innumerable desires which, if matured into absolute volitions, would have rent asunder that frail apparatus. I had relaxed the grasp, and abandoned the chase, and thrown aside the uplifted weapon, as often as my overstrained limbs admonished me that their chords would give way beneath any increased impetus. And when the living power within me had subjected my fibres to the highest pressure which they could safely endure, the arrange-

ment, and the relative position of my joints and muscles, had impeded all my movements, except in some circumscribed and unalterable directions. But my spiritual body, incapable of waste or of fracture, and responsive at every point to the impact of the indwelling mind, advanced, receded, rose or fell, in prompt obedience to each new volition, with a rapidity unimpeded, though not unlimited, by the gravitating influence of the mighty orb over the surface of which I passed. At one time I soared as with the wings of eagles, and at another plunged into the abysses of the deep. My spiritual body, the docile and indestructible instrument of my will, could outstrip the flight of the swiftest arrow, or rend the knotted oak, or shiver the primeval rocks; and then, contracting its efforts, could weave the threads of the gossamer in looms too subtle and evanescent for the touch of the delicate Ariel.

While on earth I had, like Milton, bewailed that constitution of my frame which, admitting the knowledge of visible objects only at one entrance, forbade me to converse with them except through the medium of a single nerve, and within the narrow limits of the retina. Had the poet's wish been granted, and if, departing from her benignant parsimony, nature had exposed his sensorium to the full influx of the excitements of which it was inherently susceptible, that insufferable glare would either have annihilated the percipient faculty, or would have quickened it to agonies unimagined even by his daring fancy. Under the shelter of my earthly tabernacle, which at once admitted and mitigated the light, I had in my mortal state been accustomed to point my telescope to the heavens; and, while measuring the curve described round their common centre by stars which to the unaided eye were not even disunited, I had felt how infinitely far the latent capacities of my soul for corresponding with the aspect of the exterior world transcended such powers as could be developed within me by nature or by art. An immortal, I quaffed at my pleasure the streams of knowledge and of observation for which before I had thus panted in vain. I could now scan and investigate at large the whole physical creation. At my will I could call my visual powers into action to the utmost range of their susceptibility; for in my new body I possessed the properties of every different lens in every possible variety of combination — expanding, dissecting, and refracting at any required angle the beams which, radiating from the various substances around me, brought me intelligence of the forms, the colours, and the movements of them all. Assisted by this optical incarnation, I could survey the luminary on which I dwelt, the globes whose orbits were concentric there, and, though less distinctly, the other solar spheres which glowed in the firmament above me. Not more clearly had I deci-



phered during my sojourn on earth the shapes and hues of the various beings by which it is replenished, than I now discerned the aspect and the movements of the countless species, animate and inanimate, with which the prodigal munificence of creative will has peopled the various planetary regions.

Nor was it through the intervention of light merely, that my new corporeity brought me into communication with the works of the Divine Architect. It attracted and combined for my study or my delight, all the vibratory movements, and all the gustatory and pungent emanations, by which the sense is aroused and gratified. Celestial harmony floated around me, and I breathed odours such as exhaled from Eden in the fresh dawn of the world's nativity. In that world, chained down by the coarse elements of flesh and blood, I had caught some transient glimpses of exterior things, through the five portals which opened—shall I say into my fortress, or my prison house? From the glorious mansion which my soul now inhabited, pervious to myself at every point, though secure from every hostile or unwelcome aggression, I surveyed the things around me in aspects till now unimagined. I did not merely see and hear, taste, smell, and feel, but I exercised senses for which the languages of earth have no names, and received intimations of properties and conditions of matter unutterable in human discourse. Employing this instrument of universal sensation, the inner forms of nature presented themselves before me as vividly as her exterior types. Thus entering her secret laboratories, I was present at the composition and the blending together of those plastic energies of which mundane philosophy is content to register some few of the superficial results. Each new disclosure afforded me a wider and still lengthening measure of that unfathomable wisdom and power, with the more sublime emanations of which I was thus becoming conversant. Yet such was the flexibility of my spiritualised organs, that at my bidding they could absolutely exclude every influence from without, leaving me to enjoy the luxuries of meditation in profound and unassailable solitude.

While thus I passed along the solar regions, and made endless accessions of knowledge, I was at first alarmed lest my mind should have been crushed beneath the weight of her own conquests, and the whole should be merged in one chaotic assemblage of confused recollections. From this danger I was rescued by another change in my animal economy. During my planetary existence, the structure and the health of my brain had exercised a despotic authority over my intellectual powers. Then, my mind laboured ineffectually over her most welcome tasks, if accident or indigestion

relaxed, distended, or compressed my cerebral vessels. For the time, the tools with which she wrought were deprived of their brightness and their edge. At such seasons (and they were frequent), the records of past sensations, and of the thoughts associated with them, became illegible in my memory, or could be read there only in disjointed fragments. An acid on his stomach would have rendered vain the boast of Cæsar, that he could address each of his legionaries by name. Even when all my pulses were beating with regularity and vigour, the best I could accomplish was to grope backward through my store of accumulated knowledge, holding by a single thread, to which my attention was confined, and the loss of which defeated all my efforts.

How different the tablets on which my observations of the past were recorded in my spiritual body! Unconscious of fatigue, incapable of decay, and undisturbed by any of those innumerable processes essential to the conservation of mortal life, it enabled me to inscribe in indelible lines, as on some outstretched map, each successive perception, and every thought to which it had given birth. At my pleasure, I could unroll and contemplate the entire chart of my past being. I could render myself as absolutely conscious of the former, as of the present operations of my mind, and at one retrospective glance could trace back to their various fountains all the tributary streams which combined to swell the current of my immediate contemplations. Gliding over the various provinces of the solar world, and gathering in each new treasures of information, I deposited them all beyond the reach of the great spoiler Time, in this ample storehouse of a plenary memory. With the increase of my intellectual hoard, my cravings for such wealth continually augmented. It was an avarice which no gains could satiate, and to the indulgence of which imagination itself could assign no limit.

I should, however, have become the victim of my own avidity for knowledge, if my ideas had still obeyed those laws of association to which, in my telluric state, they had been subject. Then it behoved my reason to exercise a severe and watchful government. When her control was relaxed, my thoughts would break loose from all legitimate restraint. They arranged themselves into strange groups and fantastic combinations, and established with each other such alliances as whim, caprice, or accident suggested. These once made were indissoluble. They asserted their power but too often, in resistance to the sternest mandates of my judgment and my will. But in times of debility, of disease, or of sleep, my ideas would combine into heterogeneous masses, seething and mingling together, like the ingredients of some witch's cauldron, assembled by her

incantations to work out some still more potent spell. Over the whole of this intoxicating confusion presided Carnality, in all her nervous, cerebral, vascular, and other forms, and working by means of all her digestive, secretory, and assimilating processes.

Now, no longer the inmate of a tremulous and sordid tabernacle of flesh, but inhabiting a shrine pure and enduring as her own nature, my soul was rescued from this ignoble thralldom. Accident, appetite, lassitude, the heat and fumes of my animal laboratory, had ceased to disturb the supremacy of reason. Instead of congregating as an undisciplined host, my ideas, as in some stately procession, followed each the other in meet order and predetermined sequence,—their march unobstructed by any suggestions or desires originating in my sensuous frame. I had become, not the passive recipient of thought, but the unquestioned sovereign of my own mental operations. The material organs, by the aid of which I now wrought them out, obeyed a law like that on which depend the involuntary movements of the heart and arteries, unattended by any conscious effort, and productive of no fatigue. Every increment of knowledge spontaneously assumed in my memory its proper place and relative position; and the whole of my intellectual resources fell into connected chains of argument or illustration, which I could traverse at pleasure from end to end, still finding the mutual dependence and adhesion of each successive link unbroken.

To contemplate any truth in all the relations in which it stands to every other truth, is to possess the attribute of omniscience; but in proportion as any created intelligence can combine together her ideas in their various species, genera, classes, and orders, in the same degree is diminished the distance from the Supreme Mind, immeasurable and infinite as the intervening gulf must ever remain. On earth I had been compelled, by the feebleness of my cerebral and nervous economy, to render my studies almost exclusively analytical. There, I had toiled to disencumber every question of whatever might obscure the view of the isolated point proposed as the end of my inquiries. Morals apart from physics, are disunited from logic, the science of numbers and of space detached from the exercise of the imaginative power, even theology itself divorced from the devout aspirations to which it tends, had each in turn engaged my earnest pursuit. But to ascend those heights from which they could be contemplated as parts of one harmonious whole—to seize and to blend together the analogies pervading the works of poets and mathematicians, of naturalists and divines—this was an attempt which had convinced me how indissoluble were the fetters which riveted my soul to her sluggish associate. Set free from this bond-

age, and supplied with an instrument of sensation which kept pace with her own inherent activity, she found and desired no repose. Solar time is measured by the revolutions of the planetary orbs, and from the commencement to the completion of his career through the firmament, Uranus would often find me still engaged in some unbroken contemplation. During that interval I had completed some vast synthesis, in which were at once combined and distinguished all the various aspects under which some province of knowledge had disclosed itself to my view. In the nether world, high discourse had been held on the connection of the sciences; but now I discovered the mutual influence, the interaction, and the simultaneous workings of their different laws. I no longer cultivated the exact sciences as a separate domain, but the most severe physical truth was revealed to me in union with the richest hues of ideal beauty, with the perfection of the imitative arts, with the pure abstractions of metaphysical thought, with narratives both historical and romantic, with the precepts of universal morals, and the mysteries of the Divine government. Ontology—vain-glorious word as used among men—the knowledge of universal being as distinct from species, and of species as harmonised in universal being, was the study which engaged the time and rewarded the labours of immortal minds animating spiritual bodies.

Let not those who boast themselves in logic, Aristotelian or Baconian, assume that their puny architecture of syllogistic or inductive reasoning affords the rules by which the soul, rescued from the hindrances of a carnal corporeity, erects for herself edifices of knowledge, immovable in their base, beautiful in their proportions, and towering in splendid domes and pinnacles to the skies. To Newton and to Pascal the theories of the vulgar geometry were as instinctively obvious as the preliminary axioms on which they rest. While yet an infant, Mozart was possessed of all those complex harmonies which a life of patient study scarcely reveals to inferior masters of his art. In my planetary existence, I had rejoiced in my habitual aptitude for physiology and historical researches, nor had I regretted the years of ceaseless toil devoted to them. But now I discovered that in myself, as in the great men I have mentioned, the apprehensiveness of truth had depended far more on the animal than the mental framework. Quick and vigorous, in high bodily health, but sluggish and inert under the pressure of corporeal debility, I learned that logic, experiment, and calculation had been but so many crutches to assist the movements of the halt and feeble; and that, with a physical instrumentality which study could not exhaust nor disease assail, intuition took the place of reasoning. I became rather the conscious witness, than the agent,



of the process by which consequences were evolved from the premises brought under my notice.

In the society of which I had become a member, as in mundane communities, discourse was amongst the chief springs both of improvement and delight. So curiously fashioned was the integument within which my mind was now enveloped, that, after the manner of an eyelid, it could either exclude the access of any external excitement, creating within me an absolute and impregnable solitude, or lay open to the immediate survey of an associate any thought or combination of thoughts which I desired to impart to him. I had acquired two distinct languages, one of visible signs, the other of audible symbols. The first was analogous to the mute dialogue which is carried on in pantomime by gesture and the varying expressions of the countenance; though, unlike such discourse, it was exempt from all conjectural and ambiguous meanings. As in a camera-obscura, my corporeal organs reflected the workings of the informing spirit; so that, like the ancient Peruvians, I could converse as by a series of pictures, produced and shifted with instantaneous rapidity. This mode of communication served my turn when I had any occurrences to relate, or any question to discuss, of which sensuous objects formed the basis. But when phenomena purely psychological, destitute of all types in the material creation, were to be conveyed to a companion, I had audible symbols by which every intellectual conception, and each fluctuating state of moral sentiment, might be expressed as distinctly as geometrical diagrams express the corresponding ideas to which they are allied. By the intermixture of pictorial and symbolical speech, I could thus render myself intelligible throughout the whole range and compass of my mental operations, and could give utterance to all those subtle refinements of thought or of sensation, which even amongst those who spoke the vernacular tongue of Plato, must, from the want of fit and determinate indications have either died away in silence, or have been exhaled in some mystic and unintelligible jargon. Whatever distinctness of expression the pencil or vibratory chords enabled Raphael or Handel to give to their sublime but otherwise ineffectual conceptions, I had thus the power to impart to each modification of thought, and to every shade of feeling. Verbal controversies, sophistry, and all the other 'idols of the cavern,' had disappeared. Philosophy and her legitimate issue, wisdom, piety, and love, were cultivated and treasured up by each member of the great solar family, not as a private hoard to minister only to his own uses, but as a fund universally communicable, and still augmenting by constant interchange.

It is difficult or impossible to speak intelligibly, in the language of men, of the delights or of the duties of the state of being into which I had thus entered. Borne along in the vehicle of my spiritual body, I dreaded no fatigue, and was deterred by no danger in the discharge of the most arduous enterprises. Aspects of the creation, hidden from me while garmented in the gross elements of flesh and blood, now burst on my perception as light visits him who, in mature life, for the first time acquires the visual faculty. Through each new avenue of sense thus successively opened to me, my soul, with raptures, such as seraphs feel, drew in from the still-expanding circumference wonder and delight, and an ever-increasing consciousness of the depths of her own being and resources. Contemplating the hidden forms and the occult mechanism of the material universe, I left behind me the problems with which physical science is conversant, and advanced to that higher philosophy which investigates the properties of spiritual agents; and to a theology, compared with which that which I had hitherto acquired was as insignificant as the inarticulate babblings of the cradle. My retrospective consciousness—for memory it can scarcely be called—spread out before me scenes, the bright, harmonious, and placid lights of which were mellowed, though unobscured, by distance. Misgivings as to the stability of my own opinions had fled away, as the truths with which I was engaged presented themselves to me simultaneously in their relative bearings and mutual dependence. Love, pure and catholic, warmed and expanded my heart, as thoughts wise, equitable, and benign flowed from other minds into my own in a continuous stream; the pellucid waters of which, in the inherent transparency of our regenerate nature, no deceit could darken and no guile pollute. My corporeal fabric, now become the passive instrument of my will, importuned me with no unwelcome intrusions; but buoyant, flexible, and instinct with life and vigour, obeyed every volition, and obstructed the accomplishment of none.

Yet had I not passed into that torpid elysium of which some have dreamed, and over the descriptions of which many more have slumbered. Virtue, and her stern associate, Self-control, exact obedience not from the denizens of earth alone, but from the rational inhabitants of every province of the universal empire. With each accession of knowledge and of mental power, my view became continually wider and more extended of that gulf, which, stretching out in measureless infinitude, separates the Source of Being from the most exalted of his intelligent offspring. My affiance in the Divine wisdom and rectitude, reposing on foundations deep and firm in proportion to my larger acquaintance with

the ways of Providence, was still necessary to sustain my trembling spirit as I meditated on the mysteries of the Divine government. For, within the reach of my observation, were discernible agonising intensities of suffering, abysses of pollution and of guilt, attesting the awful powers both of endurance and of activity of minds ejected from the defences, and despoiled of the narcotics, once afforded them by their animal structure. Awakened to a sense of their inherent though long-slumbering energies, they were captives. Exposed to every painful excitement by which the sentient faculty can be stimulated, they were naked. Reading on the face of nature inscriptions till now illegible, they saw in them their own condemnation. Remembering each incident of their former existence, they found in each fresh aliment for despair. Disabused of the illusions of sophistry and self-love, truth shed on them the appalling glare of inevitable light. Interchanging thoughts without the possibility of disguise, every foul and malignant desire diffused amongst them a deadly contagion. Destitute of any separate wants or interests, their bodies could no longer minister to them the poor relief of an alternation of distress. The reluctant and occasional spectator of such woes, I found in faith and hope, and meek adoration, the solace which my labouring spirit required—a task commensurate with my now-elevated powers, though the firmest and the holiest of mortals, while yet detained in his tenelement of the flesh, would have been crushed and maddened beneath the burden of that fearful sight.

In the schools of the world, I had wandered in the endless mazes of fate and free-will, and the origin of evil. An inhabitant of the great celestial luminary, I became aware of relations till then unheard of and inconceivable, between the Emanative Essence and the hosts of subordinate spirits, and of questions thence resulting, of such strange and mighty import, that, prostrating myself before the wisdom and benevolence of the Most High, I was still compelled, in reverential awe, to acknowledge how inscrutable, even to my expanded capacity, was the thick darkness which shrouds His secret pavilion.

Nor were there wanting tasks, which summoned to the utmost height of daring the most courageous of the inhabitants of the sphere to which I had been translated. Glorious recompense was to be won by deeds such as immortal beings only could undertake or meditate. Ministers of the Supreme, we braved at His bidding the privation of all other joys in the delight of prompt obedience to His will. We waged with His enemies fierce conflicts, and exposed ourselves to ills, intense during their continuance, in proportion to the exquisite sensibilities of our purified corporeity.

Impelled by irresistible compassion, by the cravings of insatiable benevolence, or by the vehement desire to obtain or to impart tidings affecting the happiness of our own or of other orders of thinking beings, our active powers, with all our resources of constancy, magnanimity, and prudence, were called into habitual exercise; nor were there wanting dignities to be attained, or sceptres to be won, as the meet reward of illustrious achievements.

A soft and protracted flow of vocal harmony, sustained by the firmer cadence of vibrating chords, now broke in on my contemplations. It could (I at first thought) be nothing else than a choir of seraphs hymning the glorious exploits of the immortals among whom I sojourned. Yet the notes seemed familiar as household names, and the deepest springs of affection began to rise within me as I listened to those young and well-remembered voices. Then we heard the joyous laugh, the logs crackling on the warm hearth, and the hissing urn; while the gentle pressure on my shoulder of a hand embellished with the still bright nuptial ring, recalled me from the Empyræan on high to my home on earth, from the Paradise above to the Eden which I had been graciously permitted to cultivate and adorn below. I cannot truly say that I regretted the descent; yet when the vespers of my household had been sung, and the Divine presence invoked, and the parental benedictions uttered, and my happy choristers dismissed to their light slumbers, I called once more for my trusty pen, and drew up a sketch of 'The Physical Theory of a Future State,' which, when matured by more patient labour, became one of the most popular of the works which I have given to the world without my name, though not without the hope to win an enduring reputation among men.

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When the author of the 'Natural History of Enthusiasm' threw away the scabbard in his war with the periodical tribe, he must have been prepared for vindictive reprisals. But it is improbable that he ever anticipated them in a form so audacious as this. To invent and publish an autobiography for him! to infer his personal history from his historical and other inquiries! to spell out even his dreams from his physiological speculations! all this is (he may perhaps say) to be exceedingly impertinent. Yet we have studied his writings to little purpose if such shall be his real sentence. Supposing him to condescend so far as to read such pages as these at all, he will (we doubt not) recognise in them rather the feelings of attachment and reverence with which a grateful pupil looks up



to his teacher, than the offensive familiarity which would level the distinctions of intellectual rank. The station he holds (or deserves to hold) in the commonwealth of letters, would make such rudeness recoil with destructive force on the presumptuous author of it.

His title to that station rests chiefly in the breadth and comprehensiveness of his views of the history, the prospects, and the character of our race. His survey of human affairs is conducted from an elevation far above the mists of religious or political partisanship. His most inquisitive readers could never have discovered that he was a nonconformist, had he not announced himself in that character. Unaided by that avowal, he must have been considered only as a cosmopolitan student and teacher of Christian ethics and polity; as the grave censor of all ecclesiastical sects, the admirer of none, the eulogist of none, the member of none; as contemplating the universal Church and each of her children (disunited and discordant as they are) with a fervent though foreboding affection, and yet as pledged to a passionate and relentless hostility against that sect (ever shifting its name but never changing its character), which, under the semblance of superhuman virtues, and the pretext of divine authority, still aims at the establishment of a spiritual despotism over the people, and the kingdom, of the Redeemer.

The 'Natural History of Enthusiasm' and the kindred works which followed it, constitute in effect a series of lectures on the latent principles which govern the course of ecclesiastical affairs, and which solve the enigmas, reconcile the contradictions, and harmonise the jarring elements by which they are perplexed. Striding from one height of generalisation to another, the teacher leaves far below him the lower world in which antiquarians, story-tellers, biographers, and dramatists are seeking the materials of their several crafts. He narrates no incidents, sketches no characters, and delineates no aspect either of social or of solitary life. His readers are supposed to be as familiar with the mere facts of history as himself (a very hazardous supposition), and must bring to the perusal of these books either much knowledge, or unbounded faith.

But though thus dwelling on the mountain tops of abstraction, he never attempts to scale beyond the limits within which the inspired volume has circumscribed all human inquiries. His assent to Christianity is no faint admission that the balance of conflicting arguments inclines in favour of that belief. It is a conviction rooted in the inmost recesses of his soul, the germinating principle of all the thoughts which have taken the deepest root, and which most luxuriantly flourish there. Though it is at once

the labour and the solace of his life to scale the eminences and to measure the depths of truth; yet truth and the Christian revelation are synonymes in his vocabulary. With an ear trained to listen to the under tones of the Divine voice, and a heart exercised in interpreting the inarticulate language of the Divine government, he has studied the written word as they only can study it, to whom it is the distinct echo or the vivid reflection of those interior senses.

While thus grappling with principles of the widest span, our lecturer never indulges himself in so much as a momentary repose in the lap of mysticism. He steadily refuses the too ready aid of that familiar narcotic. His outline is drawn with a hand as free and bold as that of Guizot, his speculations are scarcely less recondite than those of Coleridge, but his athletic good sense disdains to enlarge itself by looming through a fog. Master as he is of the *chiaro-scuro*, the love of truth is ever too strong in him for the love of art. He has risen above the fashions of his age so far as to shun the region in which sublimity and nonsense hold divided rule; remembering, perhaps, that it has never been frequented by any of the master-spirits of the world, and that, among men divinely inspired, he who was at once the greatest and the most profoundly learned, had thought it better to speak five words to edification, than to speak ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

And yet these works have never been rewarded by the full tide of applause or of popularity to which they have so many titles. The tribute rendered to their writer has been very inadequate to his claims on the public gratitude. It is not difficult to assign the reason.

Wisdom is lovely still, in every form and under every disguise; whether inspiring the merriment of Momus,—or prattling in homely fables,—or carving on the mind of man, as on a tablet, apothegmatic inscriptions for the use of all ages,—or employing as her instrument the passions of the orator, the visions of the poet, or the abstractions of the philosopher. But even wisdom ceases to captivate, because she ceases to be recognised, when she sustains at the same moment different and inharmonious offices, or characters at variance with each other. Pasquin impassioned, Æsop rhetorical, Franklin visionary, Demosthenes clad in Jacques' suit of motley, are so many masqueraders, from whom the studious expect no instruction, and the idle no amusement. Congruity of style is not less indispensable than unity of design, to the success of any work of art.

To the neglect and want of that congruity, the historian of 'Enthusiasm,' of 'Spiritual Despotism,' and of 'Fanaticism,' must

ascribe the disproportion between the power which animates his writings, and the effect which they produce. That which should be narrative is absorbed, and, as it were, dried up into aphorisms, and that which should be aphorism is dissolved and expanded in a flood of rhetoric. His books contain neither occurrences for the entertainment of the inquisitive, nor a body of carefully-digested and well-measured doctrines for the meditation of the thoughtful. The teaching and the eloquence jar with, and spoil one another.

The eloquence, moreover, is none of the best. Be his theme what it may, the march of the historian or lecturer is still the same; stately, studied, and wearisome, period rolls after period in measured cadence, page answers page in scientific harmony. This paragraph challenges applause for its melodious swell, that for its skilful complexity, the next for the protracted simile with which it brings some profound inquiry to a picturesque and graceful close. But the free movement and the welcome repose, and the brave neglect of embellishments, which are the usual badges of power, are wanting; and their absence suggests the very erroneous belief that the power on which they usually wait is wanting also.

This superfine style is a besetting sin of modern nonconformist literature. It has infected the sermons of Hall, their greatest preacher, the essays of Foster, their greatest thinker, and the commentary of Adam Clarke, their greatest biblicist. It may be traced in other living authors among them not less distinctly than in this their Prælector on Church History. It springs out of the jealousy and the self-assertion incident to the place they occupy in the social and the learned world. It says, or seems to say, though Oxford rejects us, and Cambridge knows us not, and Lambeth looks down on us, and May Fair eschews our company, yet you shall see that we can be as refined and as elevated in sentiment, and as abstruse in speculation as the best of them; that we can write as gorgeously as your public orators, and as learnedly as if we wore scarlet hoods in St. Mary's. In very deed, good friends, you can do all this, and many more and better things than these; and you would do them too, if you could but settle it in your minds that from the scorn which galls, and the indignities which ruffle you, you have an appeal both to Cis- and Trans-atlantic England, and that your appeal will be most effectually made, when made with the least seeming consciousness of the wrongs under which you labour.

Style in literature is like manner in society—the superficial index which all can read of internal qualities which few can decipher. If the author of these lectures and essays had either

written with ease and simplicity, or had disguised his meaning under spasmodic contortions, or had talked over these grave matters in the tone of a blunt humorist, or had flattened them down to the level of a monotonous orthodoxy; if, in a word, he had either risen to the graces of nature, or condescended to those of affectation, his admirers would have been more numerous and more enthusiastic. Language in his hands is an instrument of wonderful volume, flexibility, and compass; but it is made to produce harmonies of such subtle elaboration, that the ear aches for the even flow of a few plain words quietly taking their proper places. Felicitous expression is an excellent thing in its season; but serve up a whole octavo full of exquisite sentences, and neither the guest nor the cook himself can clearly tell what the repast is made of. In the didactic works of the Historian of Enthusiasm, as in those of Dr. Channing, penury and affluence of thought are made to look so like each other, that they must be undressed in order to be distinguished; and while he is making out which is which, the courteous reader is apt to lose his courtesy. In proportion as he is the more profound thinker of the two, the Englishman is the more to be upbraided for the perverse ingenuity which thus mars his own success. Objects so elevated as his ought not to have been exposed to such hazard.

It is, however, chiefly, though not exclusively, when he fills the Professor's chair, that he is to be numbered among the promoters 'corruptæ eloquentiæ.' As an assailant of the heresiarchs of his age, he was quite another man, and his war-cry rang sharp and clear. His philosophic and his belligerent notes differed as the contortions of the muscles differ from calisthenics; or as Samson struggling with the cords which bound him, differed from Samson falling with unfettered limbs on the hapless Philistines. Throwing aside his gown, with all its elaborate and graceful folds, he girded up his loins for the combat, and presented himself to his applauding friends and discomfited opponents a literary athlete, in good wind and perfect training, his thoughts condensed and his words compressed within the narrow limits of time and space permitted him by the conditions of the controversy. Each successive number became more nervous, pungent, and idiomatic, and he quitted the field not without the praise (the last probably to which he ever aspired) of considerable proficiency even in the arts of sarcasm and banter.

In his speculations on the state and employments of the human soul when clad with her post-sepulchral or spiritual body, he resumed the abstract style of his prælections polished up to a height of painful brilliancy, though their turgid and declamatory tone



was exchanged for a manner more in unison with themes so grave and so exalted. Voyages of discovery in Utopia, when conducted by skilful explorators, are, however, so rich in the returns they make to this world of realities, that it would be mere captiousness to complain of the phraseology of the journal or the log-book.

Since death entered into our world, every tribe of men, almost every individual of our species, has been labouring to penetrate the dark abyss into which it conducts one generation after another. Scipio dreamt of colloquies with the wise and the good of all ages. Mahomet taught the students of the Koran to dream (if Sale's translation may be trusted) of 'rivers of incorruptible water and rivers of milk, the taste whereof changeth not; gardens planted with shady trees, in each of which shall be two flowing fountains; couches, the linings whereof shall be of thick silk, interwoven with gold; and beauteous damsels refraining their eyes from beholding any but their spouses, having complexions like rubies and pearls, and fine black eyes.' The Esquimaux also has his heaven, where seal skins may be procured in placid seas, and undying lamps are fed with inexhaustible supplies of the odorous grease of bears.

The stream can rise no higher than the fountain. Our ideas of immortal good are but amplifications of our mortal enjoyments. To associate together all innocent and not incompatible delights known to us by actual experience, subtracting from them every alloy of pain, satiety, and langour, and thus to sublimate and define our conceptions of felicity, is to be the creator of the only heaven, by the contemplation of which hope can be sustained and activity invigorated. He who most diligently and cheerfully surveys the 'happy gardens' to which a benign Providence may have conducted him in this world, is the best qualified to depict the Elysium which reason or imagination has laid out and planted for the abode of the blessed beyond the grave.

The author of 'The Physical Theory of a Future Life,' judged by this test, must be esteemed a wise and a happy man. Wise, because, affecting no superhuman disdain of mere bodily gratifications, he has no fear of acknowledging to others, or to himself, the dependence of his spiritual on his animal economy; and happy, because he must distinctly have experienced that unresisting servitude of the body to the soul, which he has so vividly described as the great element of her serenity and freedom. Such as is his solar Paradise, such must also have been his earthly Eden: the first, his future blessedness in the highest conceivable measure; the last, his present happiness in the highest attainable degree. Such a midsummer night's dream could have visited the slumbers of no one whose fancy was tainted with sensual defilement, or whose in-

telleet was untrained to active exercise and close self-inspection. Or, if the theorist be really entitled to no higher praise than that of having skilfully selected the most alluring possibilities of future good from the many celestial schemes with which the poetry and the fiction of all ages abound, yet even so it must be conceded that the choice has been guided by opinions such as everyone must wish to adopt, and by tastes which, in our better moments, we should all desire to gratify.

If our theorist had constructed his heaven from the materials gathered in his survey, not of his domestic, but of the outer world, there would, we apprehend, have been but few aspirants for a translation to it. For, both the world of active and the world of contemplative life, as they exist beyond the precincts of his own retirement, present themselves to him in dark and uninviting aspects. He mourns over the low estate of theology among us, and laments the degradation of all those higher intellectual pursuits with which theology maintains an indissoluble connection. Acquainted, perhaps but too well, with the religious parties of our State, their infirmities and their faults, he pours out eloquent longings for the advent of a more catholic spirit, of piety more intense and less ostentatious, and of a sacred literature animated by some nobler impulse than the hire of booksellers and the praise of ephemeral critics. His own labours for the happiness of mankind, do not seem to be well sustained by the cheering influence of hope. His philanthropy is ever tinged with sadness. He loves children, because they are exempt from the prevailing degeneracy; — and the face of nature, because it is the one unsullied reflection of the benignity of the Creator; — and the books of other times, because they are the records of human wisdom, whose living voice is no longer to be heard; — and the Universal Church, because it is the ark floating on the troubled waters of this evil time, freighted with the best treasures, and charged with the destinies of our race. Man also he loves, but with feelings pensive if not melancholy, and fastidious even when most benignant. In his many books there is no tinge of spleen; but they exhibit that disgust for the follies and the vices of the world, which at once demands and discourages exertion.

Casting off these depressing influences, he has, however, devoted all the resources of a comprehensive understanding, and all the affections of a benevolent heart, to correct the general debasement, and to exhibit a model of those higher pursuits to which he would reclaim his generation. Enthusiasts, fanatics, spiritual despots, sciologists in education, the pastors who slumber within the fold, and the robbers from without who spoil it, form a confederacy, the

assailant of which should be encouraged by the gratitude of all good men. If the soul of William Cowper yet breathes among us, it is through the lips of the historian of Enthusiasm. Not, indeed, that the poet has found a successor in the magic art of establishing a personal and affectionate intimacy between himself and his readers. There is no new fire-side like that of Olney round which we can gather; nor any walks like those of Weston Underwood, of which we are the companions; nor a heart at once broken and playful, whose sorrows and amusements are our own; nor are we surrounded by a family group, with tame hares, spaniels, bird-cages, and knitting-needles, as familiar to us as those of our own boyhood, and almost as dear, — each in turn reflecting the gentle, thoughtful, elevated mind of him to whom they belonged, in all its vicissitudes of despondency and hope, of grave wisdom and of a mirth as light and pure as that of infancy. This is the high prerogative of genius, addressing mankind at large through the vernacular idiom of one land in the universal language of all. But Stanford Rivers has given birth to a succession of efforts to exalt the national character, which might vie with those of Olney and of Weston in piety and earnestness, in genuine freedom of thought, in the relish for all the domestic pleasures and innocent delights of life, in the filial love of God, and the brotherly love of man.

Learning and logical acumen, and a wide acquaintance with the history and the heart of man, which the poet neither possessed nor needed, impart to the works of the essayist a charm, without which it is vain, in these days, to interfere in the debates which agitate society. There is a charm, too, even in his distaste for the pursuits most in request amongst us; for it springs from the grandeur of the ideal excellence by which his imagination is possessed. He remembers that Omniscience, though veiling its intimations in the coarse mantle of human language, will occasionally emit some gleams of that radiance which illumines the regions of the blessed; and these he would reverently gather and concentrate. He is conscious that there is in Christianity an expansive power, sometimes repressed but never destroyed; and that latent energy he strives to draw forth into life and action. He perceives that the mysteries which shroud the condition and the prospects of our race, however inscrutable to the slaves of appetite, are not absolutely impervious to a soul purified by devout contemplation; and to these empyreal heights he aspires at once to point and to lead the way. He knows that to him whose foot is firmly planted on the eternal verities of Heaven, there belong motives of such force, and a courage so undaunted, as should burst through all resistance;

and he calls on those who enjoy this high privilege to assert their native supremacy above the sordid ambition, the frivolities, and the virulence of the lower world. The voice thus raised in expostulation will die away, not indeed unheeded by the interior circle he addresses, nor unblessed by a meet recompense; but unrewarded, we fear, by the accomplishment of these exalted purposes. Eloquent as is the indignation with which our anonymous monitor regards the low level to which divine and human literature has fallen amongst us, and mean as is his estimate of the pursuits in which the men of his own days are engaged, a hope may perhaps, without presumption, be indulged, that less fastidious and not less capable judges will pronounce a more lenient sentence on us and on our doings.

In the great cycle of human affairs there are many stages, each essential to the consummation of the designs of Providence, and each separated by broad distinctions from the rest. They whose province it is to censure, and they whose desire it is to improve their age, will never find their sacred fires extinct from the mere want of fuel. History and theory are always at hand with humiliating contrasts to the times we live in. That men have been better or might be better than they are, has been true since the first fathers of our race returned to their native dust, and will still be true as long as our planet shall be inhabited by their descendants. But below the agitated surface of the ocean, under-currents are silently urging forward, on their destined path, the waters of the mighty deep, themselves impelled by that Power which none may question or resist. Human society obeys a similar influence. Laws as anomalous in appearance, as uniform in reality, as those which direct the planetary movements, determine the present state, and regulate the progress of commonwealths, whether political, literary, or religious. Christianity demands the belief, and experience justifies the hope, that their ultimate tendency is towards the universal dominion of piety and virtue. But it is neither pious nor rational to suppose, that this consummation can be attained by any sequence of identical causes constantly working out similar effects.

The best generations, like the best men, are those which possess an individual and distinctive character. A chain of splendid biographies constitutes the history of past centuries. Whoever shall weave the chronicles of our own, must take for his staple not biography but statistics, illuminated by a skilful generalisation. Once every eye was directed to the leaders of the world; now all are turned to the masses of which it is composed. Instead of Newtons presiding over Royal Societies, we have Dr. Birkbecks lecturing at Mechanics' Institutes. If no Wolseys arise to found



colleges like that of Christchurch, Joseph Lancaster and William Bell have emulated each other in works not less momentous at the Borough Road and Baldwin's Gardens. We people continents, though we have ceased to discover them. We abridge folios for the many, though we no longer write them for the few. Our fathers compiled systems of divinity — we compose pocket theological libraries. They invented sciences, we apply them. Literature was once an oligarchy, it is now a republic. Our very monitors are themselves infected by the degeneracy they deplore. For the majestic cadence of Milton, and the voluptuous flow of Jeremy Taylor's periods, they substitute the rhetorical philosophy, invented some fifty years since, to countervail the philosophical rhetoric of the French Revolution; and put forth, in a collection of essays for the drawing-room, reproofs which the hands of Prynne would have moulded into learned, fierce, and ponderous folios.

It is impossible to prevent — is it wise to bewail? — this change in our social and intellectual habits. During the inundations of the Nile, the worship of the mysterious river ceased, and no hymns were heard to celebrate its glories. Idolatry had lost its stay, and imagination her excitement: but the land was fertilised. Learning, once banked up in universities and cathedrals, is now diffused through shops and factories. The stream, then so profound and limpid, may now, perhaps, be both shallow and muddy. But is it better that the thirst of a whole nation should be thus slaked, or that the immortals should be quaffing their nectar apart in sublime abstraction from the multitude? There is no immediate and practicable reconciliation of these advantages. Genius, and wit, and science, and whatever else raises man above his fellows, must bend to the universal motives of human conduct. When honour, wealth, public gratitude, and the sense of good desert, reward those who teach elementary truth to the people at large, the wisest and the best will devote to that office powers, which, in a different age, would have been consecrated to more splendid, though not perhaps to more worthy undertakings.

In the state of letters, there is no maintaining a polity in which the three elements of power are blended together in harmonious counterpoise. There a monarch infallibly becomes a despot, and a democracy subjugates to itself whatever else is eminent or illustrious. Divines, poets, and philosophers, addressing millions of readers and myriads of critics, are immediately rewarded by an applause, or punished by a neglect, to which it is not given to mortal man to be superior or indifferent. Inform the national mind, and improve the general taste, up to a certain point, and to

that point you inevitably depress the efforts of those who are born to instruct the rest. Had Spenser flourished in the nineteenth century, would he have aspired to produce the Faery Queen? Had Walter Scott lived in the sixteenth, would he have condescended to write the Lady of the Lake? Our great men are less great because our ordinary men are less abject. These lamentations over the results of this compromise are rather pathetic than just. It forms one indispensable chapter in the natural history of a people's intellectual progress. It is one of the stages through which the national mind must pass towards the general elevation of literature, sacred and profane. We know not how to regret that genius has for the moment abdicated her austere supremacy, and stooped to be popular and plain. Mackintosh suspended his philosophy for the compilation of a familiar History of England. Faithless to his Peris and Glendoveers, Mr. Moore turned chronicler to teach to the reading commonalty of the realm the sad tale of the woes inflicted on the land of his birth. No longer emulous of Porson, the Bishop of London devotes his learned leisure to preparing cheap and easy lessons for the householders of his diocese. Lord Brougham arrests the current of his eloquence, to instruct mechanics in the principles of the sciences which they are reducing to daily practice. Tracts for the times are extorted from the depositories of ecclesiastical tradition, obedient to the general impulse which they condemn, and constrained to render the Church argumentative, that they may render her oracular. Nay, the author of the 'Natural History of Enthusiasm' himself, despite his own protests, yielding at length to the current, has become the periodical writer of monthly tracts, where, in good round controversial terms, the superficial multitude are called to sit in judgment on the claims of the early fathers to sound doctrine, good morals, and common sense. Let who will repine at what has passed, and at what is passing, if they will allow us to rejoice in what is to come. If we witness the growth of no immortal reputations, we see the expansion of universal intelligence. The disparities of human understanding are much the same in all times; but when the general level shall be the highest, then will the mighty of the earth rise to the most commanding eminences.

But whatever may be the justice of the hopes we thus indulge for future generations, our business is with ourselves. If, as we think, they are well judging who devote the best gifts of nature and of learning to the instruction of the illiterate, the praise of wisdom is not to be denied to such as write with the more ambitious aim of stimulating the nobler intellects amongst us to enterprises commensurate with their elevated powers. No strenuous

effort for the good of mankind was ever yet made altogether in vain; nor will those of our author be fruitless, though the results may fall far short of his aspirations. The general currents of thought and action can never be diverted from their channels, except by minds as rarely produced as they are wonderfully endowed. Energy, decision, and a self-reliance independent of human praise or censure, are amongst the invariable characteristics of such master intellects. To this sublime order of men the Recluse of Stanford Rivers does not belong. Nor can a place be assigned to him among those calmer spirits, whose inventive genius, or popular eloquence, has enabled them from their solitudes to cast on the agitated mass of society seeds of thought destined at some future period to change the aspect of human affairs. He is an independent more than an original thinker. He is rather exempt from fear than animated by ardent courage in announcing the fruits of his inquiries. A great master of language, he is himself but too often mastered by it. He is too much the creature to become the reformer of his age. His assiduity to please is fatal to his desire to command. His efforts to move the will are defeated by his success in dazzling the fancy. Yet his books exhibit a character, both moral and intellectual, from the study of which the reader can hardly fail to rise a wiser and a better man. Standing aloof from all vulgar excitements, heedless of the transient politics and the fugitive literature of his times, and intent only on the permanent interests of mankind, he has laboured to promote them with an honest love of truth, aided by brilliant talents, comprehensive knowledge, and undaunted intrepidity. And thus he has come under the guidance of principles, which no man can cultivate in his own bosom, or earnestly impart to other minds, without earning a reward which will render human applause insignificant, or reduce the neglect of the world to a matter of comparative indifference.

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## THE EPILOGUE.

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ON the original appearance in the 'Edinburgh Review' of the Essays contained in these volumes, they were condemned, by some, as casting only a furtive and timid glance at those sacred topics which must lie at the foundation of all ecclesiastical biography. To the author himself, however, it had appeared impossible to assign to such topics their due prominence in a journal devoted to science, to literature, and to politics. But, on republishing these papers in his own person, and with his name, he contracts and acknowledges the obligation to supply, as far as may be in his power, the omissions which formerly appeared to him inevitable. He is even solicitous to avow, without reserve, the opinions which have been rather suggested or assumed, than explicitly stated, in the preceding pages. Having celebrated, with almost equal zeal, the characters of many who maintained creeds and worshipped under forms widely contrasted with each other, he is desirous to disclaim that state of mind to which all religious distinctions are insignificant, and to explain why the reverence of all the members of the great Christian family is, in his judgment, due alike to many who have belonged to each of the great sections of which it is composed. Great as must be his liability to error on such a subject, he rejoices to know that such errors can hardly be injurious to any one. No authority will be attached by any other inquirer to the mere 'Guesses at Truth' of a man, who (unlike the profound and large-minded scholars who have appropriated that title to some of their maturest thoughts) is destitute of the advantage of a theological education, and has throughout his life been deeply involved, with scarcely any interval, in secular affairs. Yet, to assist as far as possible in the detection of any fallacies by which he may have been misled, he will attempt to render an account of the reasons by which he has been guided; taking his departure from principles which he supposes to be elementary.

From our Redeemer himself we have learnt what are the two commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets.



From the disciple who lay in his bosom, and whom he selected as the channel of his higher revelations, we have learnt what are the two truths on which hang all the other doctrines of the Gospel. The first is, that God is light—the second is, that God is love.

God is light. He is light, inherent, pure, and inexhaustible. He is also light diffusive, or ‘the Father of lights.’ From him, as from an ever-salient fountain, light flows out to his whole animate creation. But to each different order of living beings it flows in infinitely varied degrees of intensity and clearness. It comes to each through various mediums by which it is refracted. It is discoloured in each by the corruptions of the recipient, or obscured by their infirmities. Light, though from Heaven itself, when transmitted through the exhalations of earth, may mislead even those whom it illuminates.

From God we derive the light of our Animal Instincts—that is, our natural appetencies, and our natural aversions towards material things. But the sorrows of a world, groaning beneath the curse of intemperance, proclaim that they who were formed in the image and likeness of their Creator, can never be guided into the ways of wisdom, or into the paths of peace by appetite alone.

From God we derive the light of our Sensitive Instincts—that is, those sympathies and antipathies which are the bonds of attachment or the sources of disunion amongst mankind. But to trust to our passions alone to conduct us to the repose of the soul—the haven of our rest and our true happiness—would be as reasonable as to navigate the ocean without rudder, chart, or compass, at the bidding of each shifting breeze and devious current.

From God we derive the light of our Intellectual Instincts—that is, those intuitions or convictions of the mind which are common to the whole race of man, which form the latent basis of all our argumentations, and to which we inevitably, though often unconsciously, refer as the test by which to ascertain the soundness of all our inferences. Such, for example, is the indestructible belief in our own individuality—in the reality of the relation of cause and effect—in the real existence of the objects revealed to us by our senses—in the recurrence of the same sequences when all the antecedents are the same—with many other of those first principles which are implied in all our words, and assumed in all our thoughts. Yet how insufficient these first axioms are to lead us to true wisdom, is attested by the incurable discords of the wisest. There are depths of ignorance, and abysses of self-inflicted misery, into which the possession of these great elements of knowledge has never prevented, and never can prevent, the great body of mankind from plunging.

From God we derive the light of our Judicial Instincts—that is, of conscience, the interior tribunal by which we are either approved or condemned, in the use we make of that measure of free will and of free agency which is entrusted to us. This is the restraint which the Author of that awful power has imposed on the improper, the capricious, or the arbitrary use of it. But the accuracy of all judicial sentences depends on the knowledge, the capacity, the patience, and the impartiality of the judge. Who will venture to claim for the judge within his own bosom, the possession of those qualifications in a perfect, or even in an eminent degree? In what tongue or language has not the blindness of self-love passed into a proverb? Who is the man whose mental vision is not obstructed by some beam, as often as it is directed to the survey of his own heart, or of his own conduct?

From God we derive the light of our Moral Instincts—that is, of those pains and pleasures which wait on the judgments of the conscience, and form the sanctions of the law written on the heart. This sensibility renders us the executioners on ourselves of the sentences authorised by that law, and promulgated by that judge. If those sentences were invariably right, and if they as invariably awakened in us the corresponding sentiment, whether pleasurable or painful, in its proper measure and due intensity, the constitution of our nature would be perfect, and sin and sorrow would take their flight from our world. But the light of moral sentiment fails us because our self-adjudications are so often erroneous, and because our sensibility is subject to a continual decay. Like our other affections, it retains its vitality and power, just so far as it is permitted to regulate our conduct, and no farther. Emotions, followed by no practical results, first become dormant and then extinct; and this is true of self-complacency and of remorse, as much as of any other of our feelings.

From God we derive the light of our Social Instincts—that is, the reflected light of the judgments of other men. By adopting their opinions, we become, as it were, spectators of the stage on which we are ourselves the actors, and applaud or condemn our own conduct with a sort of borrowed impartiality. But the same social nature which bestows this light also obscures it. For that nature induces or rather constrains us to adjust our own standard of right and wrong to the level of the maxims, the habits, and the sentiments of the society of which we are members, however low that level may happen to be.

From God we derive the light of Understanding—that is, of the faculty which observes and reflects, which collects, premises, and deduces inferences; which has truth for its object and logic

for its guide. They who are most largely endowed with this mental power, are accustomed to assign to it a supremacy to which it is, in their judgment, absurd to suppose that any other faculty of the mind can be superior or co-ordinate. They maintain, that he who argues against the absolute dominion of the intellect admits, in effect, the very proposition which he denies in terms; and attempts, by a process of reasoning, to show that reasoning is not a process on which reliance may be placed. Yet the idolators of the human understanding had need be sustained by a very potent faith. Our dialectics have indeed ascertained some of the laws of the material world. But what is that problem, in the inquiries which most concern us, of which they have afforded to mankind a solution in which all unanimously acquiesce? What has the logical faculty ascertained respecting our relations to Him who made us — or our duties to Him or to each other — or our prospects beyond the grave — or the structure of our minds — or the relation of the mind to the body — or even respecting our highest temporal interests in political, social, and domestic life? On these topics the logicians of every age have been labouring since the creation of our race. Is there one moral truth which they have placed beyond the reach of controversy? Is there any one falsehood in moral science on which they have inflicted an incurable death wound? One position, indeed, and only one, relating to things not material, they seem to have made unassailably secure. It is the position, that logic can discover for us guides more trustworthy than itself, and can demonstrate their authority over us. And to have conducted us to such guides is, in fact, the highest triumph which the human understanding can boast.

From God we derive the light of Human Authority — that is, the teaching of our fellow men, whether they address us by the voice of ancient tradition, or of modern opinion — whether they speak to us as parents or as preceptors, as philosophers or as divines. Yet so inconsistent are the demands made upon our assent by our various teachers, and so nearly do their claims to our confidence seem to balance each other, that the injunction to ‘call no man master,’ had been laid upon us by human wisdom, long before it was sanctioned by Him in whom was impersonated the fulness of the divine wisdom.

From God we derive the light of Revelation — and what tongue, of men or of angels, can converse in terms befitting so lofty a theme? The Holy Scriptures differ from other writings in kind, rather than in degree. They, and they alone, have taught us whatever it most concerns us to know of Him who made us, and of ourselves — of the relations in which we stand to Him, and of the

duties which those relations impose upon us. They, and they only, have disclosed to us the nature, the consequences, and the remedies of sin. In them we have the portraiture, not elsewhere to be found, of the highest perfection attainable by our fallen humanity, and of that infinitely higher perfection which, though ideal in our race, was real and absolute in Him who lived and died to redeem us. The Bible is the sanctuary from out of which issue voices adapted to every exigency of human life, and to every various form of human utterance; but, amidst that boundless variety, all harmonious in the inculcation of a holiness otherwise unknown and unimagined amongst men. It is the point of convergence where meet history and biography, sacred song and weighty apophthegm, parable and proverb, law and prophecy, argument and expostulation, all steeped and imbued in the colours of our mortal nature, and moulded into its forms, and yet all instinct with the divinity of their common origin. It is the joint work of princes and of peasants, of sages and of fishermen, of saints and of publicans, all speaking in the same elevated tone, and all breathing the same pure spirit, through a long succession of fifteen centuries. It everywhere points to one great Being as the common object and centre of all revealed truth; an incarnation of deity, towards whom prophets and evangelists alike direct their adoring gaze, who imparts unity of design to the whole composition, and in whom the incommunicable attributes of the divine nature are reconciled with the essential conditions of the nature of man.

And yet what is that doctrine, what that ecclesiastical polity, what that system of moral obligation, in support of which the Bible is not confidently quoted by contending multitudes? The Catholic finds in it seven sacraments. The Quaker discovers that in the system of the sacred writers, sacraments have no place or existence whatever. To the adherents of the Nicene Creed the Scriptures disclose a doctrine which reduces the thoughts of the heart to the silent adoration of a mystery incapable of adequate expression. To those who reject that creed, the same pages appear to declare that doctrine to be nothing less than a profane idolatry. To the followers of Augustine, the Bible appears to teach fatalism; to the disciples of Pelagius, an arbitrary freedom of the human will, and the consequent contingency of all the events of human life. Some find in revelation commands to baptize infants, to keep holy the first day of the week, and to revere in bishops the legitimate successors of the apostles; while others declare that it is absolutely silent on all these subjects. The necessity of a virtuous life to a happy existence after death is, to some eyes, disclosed in the Word of God as with a sunbeam; and there are those who declare them-



selves unable to discover in it the announcement of any such indispensable connection. Thus, with the same end in view, and with the same guide-book in their hands, crowds are thronging different, nay, opposite paths, and all asserting, with apparently equal confidence, that the path they pursue is that which the Book prescribes.

Shall we then conclude that this celestial guide is erroneous or equivocal? God forbid! Or shall we say, that of the so many paths thus pursued by so many contending sects, there is one, and only one, which is trodden by the honest, the candid, and the upright, and that all who deviate from that one path, are the victims of their own levity, or prejudice, or insincerity? Or may we not find some other explanation of this phenomenon, compatible at once with the reverence due to the sacred canon, and with the charity due by every man to his brother?

First, then, let it be considered that whenever the divine voice breaks the otherwise uninterrupted silence between heaven and earth, such an occurrence supposes either that man shall be prepared for the reception of that voice by some organic change in his nature, or that his Creator should address him in human language. But human language being impressed with all the infirmities, and darkened by all the mental obscurities of those who have invented, employed, and modified it, must be a most imperfect vehicle and exponent of thought. Consequently, communications reaching us, even from the Deity himself, through the channel of our own words and ideas, must partake, more or less, of the indistinctness and ambiguity inseparable from all our thoughts and all our discourse.

Nor must it be forgotten that the Scriptures are written in languages totally unknown to the vast body of those who read them, and that incomparably the most important part of the Scriptures (that is, the words of our Lord and Saviour himself) are known to the most learned only by a translation. Here, then, is another source of the diversity of our judgments about the real sense of the Word of God. For example, the whole controversy regarding transubstantiation rests on the precise meaning of a Greek sentence, *τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σῶμά μου*; words which it is perfectly certain that Christ never uttered. In this, as in other cases, we can only conjecture what his very words were; and, in the wide field of conjecture, it is morally impossible that a real unanimity of judgment should prevail.

This source of doubt was inevitable. If our divine Master had spoken to the multitudes which thronged him, or even to the chosen twelve, in the tongues of Greece or of Rome, He would have been unintelligible to them; for, until the day of Pentecost

even Peter and John were perceived to be ‘unlearned and ignorant men.’ The Syro-Chaldaic was, therefore, the only articulate speech through which it was possible that Christ should reach and inform their understandings. Doubtless, indeed, had such been His good pleasure, He might have employed for that purpose the language of Plato or of Cicero, and might have miraculously enabled His auditors first to understand, and afterwards to record his words. But adorable was the wisdom and the grace which decided otherwise! If we *had* possessed in Greek or in Latin the very expressions of Him who spake as never man spake, what would have been the unavoidable result? What but this — that the Scaligers and the Bentleys of each successive age would have usurped over the minds of their illiterate fellow Christians an authority even more despotic than that which they have hitherto claimed and exercised? Our blessed Lord did not see fit that linguists, and critics, and grammarians, and lexicographers should thus be enabled to interpose between Himself and those whom, until the end of time, He condescended to instruct. Speaking through his original audience to all nations, and people, and tongues, and kindred of the earth, He employed an universal language — a language of which the sense is still essentially the same, and is still perceptible, in substance, to every honest inquirer, in all the various versions into which it has been translated, in all the dialects and idioms of mankind. It is the language of parable and proverb, of metaphor and of contrast. It is a language steeped in an imagery drawn from whatever is most familiar, pathetic, and beautiful, in the homely realities of man’s daily existence. It is a language which at once interprets to us the life of Him by whom it was uttered, and receives from His life its own most constant, simple, and impressive interpretation. Suppose that the story of the Prodigal Son, or of the Rich Man and Lazarus, — that the parable of the Sower, or of the Talents, — that the benediction on Mary of Bethany, or the lamentation over Jerusalem, — that the Sermon on the Mount, or the awful prayer poured out immediately before He entered into the garden with his disciples, — had been pronounced, not in the Syro-Chaldaic tongue, but in the language of the Academy, and had been recorded for our information in the precise form of words in which they were so delivered, could they have conveyed their real meaning with more precision or with greater force? Could they have been more universally welcomed, or more thoroughly digested by all the families of man, in all the varying conditions of man’s mortal existence? Would they have borne a more distinct or indelible impress of His divine love and wisdom? Would they have

better fulfilled those purposes of mercy which dictated them? Or rather, would not such a transmission from one generation to another of the very words of our Great Teacher, even though in the glorious speech of Athens, have caused them to be degraded, still, more than they have hitherto been degraded, into themes of philosophical debate, for learned trifling, for arrogant criticism, and for the dogmatical interpretations of those who, at all times, aspire to a scholastic lordship over the heritage of Christ? How narrow the capacity, how feeble the faith, which cannot or will not perceive that, in employing not the noblest and the most subtle, but one of the poorest and least elevated of the instruments of discourse ever used among civilised men, the Saviour of our race demonstrated that his thoughts were not as our thoughts; but that, when enveloped in any garb of human speech, however humble, they would pass freely and unmutilated from mind to mind, from nation to nation, and from age to age, by a law applying to them alone, and inapplicable to the highest conceptions, and to the most eloquent discourse, of any created intelligence!

There are also large opportunities for honest differences of interpretation of Holy Scripture, arising from the admitted variations between the different books of the Bible, and the different parts of the same books, in what respects the plenitude of the inspiration of each. Without entering on a subject so replete with difficulty, it may sufficiently explain the disagreements of Christians in the conclusions which they gather from the Bible, that the Bible of the greater number of them contains many books which are excluded from the Bible of the minority; and that few, if any, educated men, acknowledge the same authority in every passage of what they receive as holy writ, or have come to any clear agreement as to the passages to which the highest sanction belongs.

But a far more important explanation than any of these, of the discord between interpreters, is to be found in the very structure and design both of the Old Testament and of the New. They are not, and were never meant to be, what Urim and Thummim once were. They have no positive mandates or oracular responses for the guidance of individual inquirers in specific cases. The *sortes sanctorum* were as gross a superstition as searching the entrails of victims, or watching the flight of birds. The Bible speaks not to the eye, but to the intellect—not to the ear, but to the soul. It yields its precious ores not to those who merely search the surface, but to those only who laboriously penetrate its mines. To extract the real spirit of any one passage, many passages must be studied.

To become a scriptural interpreter, a man must have a scriptural mind, and be living a scriptural life. To those who approach this

divine light, in any temper less diligent or less devout than this, it opens innumerable sources of error. The Bible abounds in examples, some of which were never designed to be models for the imitation of any one, and many of which are unfit for our own imitation. It abounds in threatenings and promises detached from their implied, though real, conditions. It has many precepts thrown into the form of paradox—many parables involved in purposed obscurity—many sacred songs in which the genius of poetry expands itself in the abrupt, elliptical, and figurative language of imagination and passion—many proverbs in which epigram and antithesis are employed to embellish the bald precision of moral truth—many dramatic dialogues, in which the conflict of opinion supposes some of the interlocutors to speak erroneously—many letters of which we understand most imperfectly the occasions, the allusions, and the context—and innumerable references to customs, to laws, to modes of thought, and modes of action, many of which are utterly foreign to our own.

Is it, then, any reasonable cause of surprise, that the different students of the Bible should deduce from it so great a variety of conflicting opinions, and of rules of conduct opposed to each other?—or that so vast an accumulation of narratives and parables, of threatenings and promises, of hymns and proverbs, of letters and prophecies, thrown out in so free a spirit, and so usually disconnected from the restrictions and qualifications contemplated by their authors, should be intelligible only to the few who carefully collate, diligently balance, and devoutly meditate them?

From God we derive that true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world—that is, the light that emanates from the person of Christ himself. He is revealed to us, not as a mere teacher or prophet, but as in all ages a real and living presence in his Church—as one to whom we bear a spiritual consanguinity—as at once high and holy in a sense which no human language can express, and yet a very man, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh—as so intimately known to us, that in every exigency of our own lives, imagination can place him before us as at once an example and a monitor—as satisfying that craving of our nature, which, in its abuse, conducts us to idolatry, by reducing what would otherwise be an impersonal, and almost evanescent abstraction, into a definite, palpable, and familiar form—as sympathising with all our feelings which are either good or blameless, and as pitying, even while he condemns, the feelings fatal to our own happiness—as having partaken of all our sorrows, and of some of our innocent and highest enjoyments—as at once our atoning sacrifice, and the high priest by whom that sacrifice is offered—as Himself the Way,



the Truth, and the Life — as the Head in which all the members are united, the Stem from which all the branches draw their nutriment, the Shepherd by whom all the flock are gathered and protected within the same fold.

From God, also, we derive that awful interior light which the dying Saviour promised, and which the ascending Saviour bestowed — that other glory of the Christian system, and inestimable privilege of the Christian Church, by means of which the definite, the palpable, and the familiar is withdrawn, to make way for a presence (undefinable, imperceptible, yet not impersonal) of holiness, of power, and of love — a presence dwelling in a silent, though real communion with the intellect and the affections of man — a presence invoked by prayer, retained by obedience, grieved by sin, and excluded by obduracy — a presence which suggests to the soul all heaven-born thoughts, and casts out all unhallowed imaginations, and awakens that dawn of day which, if unobstructed by our own perverseness, will gradually heighten to the very noontide of spiritual wisdom.

It may seem a mere contradiction to assert or to suppose that in this rich effluence of light derived from Him whom we adore as incarnate Deity, and from Him whom we revere as indwelling Deity, darkness should yet overcast the faculties we derive from Him whom we worship as creative Deity. It should, however, be considered, that it is to the pure in heart, and to them alone, that it is permitted to see God — that it is only if the eye be single that the body can be full of light — that if the light within us be darkness, there is no measure for the depth of that darkness — that as to the production of vision by the material eye, it is necessary not only that the pure rays of light should reach the retina, but that the component humours of the eye itself should be blended together in limpid purity; so light, though proceeding from Deity himself, will produce no optical result on the mental lens which is darkened by the predominance of sensuality, or worldly mindedness, or any other debasing passion.

Thus placed at the point of convergence of so many distinct beams of light, all originally springing from the same heavenly source, yet all distorted and discoloured or obstructed in their progress by the mediums through which they pass, man, even when gifted with the clearest and the strongest vision, cannot but be to a great extent perplexed and confused. His instincts, his understanding, his conscience, his moral sentiments, his human teachers, his written oracles, his divine guides, all address him in voices which, though capable of reconciliation, cannot always be promptly reconciled. If he refuses his attention and reverence to any one

of them, it is at the imminent hazard of inducing a misapprehension of the meaning of the rest. To perceive and seize the harmony which pervades them all, is the great triumph and the high reward of wisdom. To be deaf to that harmony, is the almost universal condition of those who, without reason, claim to be wise.

Perfectly to combine into one pencil all the confluent rays of these various lights from heaven,—harmoniously to unite in one strain all these voices, which reach us simultaneously from the same divine source of knowledge,—is an attainment so sublime and arduous, as to baffle the utmost efforts of our unaided reason. Yet it is an attainment indispensable to the formation in the heart of man of that living similitude to Christ himself in which all true Christianity consists. Reverently, therefore, but with unhesitating confidence, we turn to the revealed word of God for assistance in this great exigency of our intellectual and moral nature, and in that word we read that all-embracing truth, which Christ himself lived to illustrate in action, and which it was given to His beloved disciple to concentrate in speech,—the truth, namely, that ‘God is love.’

The Hebrew psalmist knew, and even the Grecian rhapsodists occasionally surmised, that ‘God is loving unto every man, and that His mercy is over all His works.’ That God is love, is an infinitely deeper discovery. It reveals to us that awful Being, who is so infinitely exalted above our knowledge, as admitting of some approach to definition by that sentiment which, of all others, is the most familiar to our consciousness. It enables us to discern, however faintly and obscurely, the moral nature of our Creator in the yet remaining traces in ourselves of His own image and likeness, in which our first progenitor was created.

He who acknowledges Deity, must also acknowledge that He is the ‘Father Almighty, the Maker of all things visible and invisible.’ This is, indeed, the indispensable basis of all truth, physical, moral, and religious. It is denied by no man possessing a reasonable understanding,—probably by no man of a sane mind. But the inferences deduced from it by some of our teachers are of far inferior authority. Of those inferences, one of the most ancient, and the most commonly received is, that the eternity of matter is a dogma inconsistent with theism. For (it is alleged) the cause must of necessity precede the effect. The produce can never exist except in sequence to the producer. The maker of any thing must needs have existed in priority to that which he has made. The maker of all things must have had his being when as yet there was no other thing. But that being could itself have had no com-

mencement. There was, therefore (so it is inferred), an eternity inhabited by Deity alone, in a profound and unbroken solitude, *before* the creation of the material or immaterial universe.

Now they who thus reason are taking for granted, that whatever is universally true of those modes of existence with which we are conversant, must also be true of all other modes of existence. They assume that time — that is, the succession of events or of thoughts, — is an eternal, an universal, and a necessary part of the law of all being. They thus ascribe the properties of time to eternity, — that is, to a state in which, by the hypothesis, time was not. They venture to discourse of an *eternity*, which, on reaching a certain epoch, *came to an end!* and indulge in the use of words, to which it is impossible either for themselves or for any one else to attach any real meaning. This extravagant and presumptuous dogmatising in the science of universal ontology is, however, only one of the futile attempts which man so continually makes to overleap the impassable limits of his knowledge. Speculations so wild and so audacious would be best opposed by silence, were they not urgent to consequences which demand at least a transient notice. Among those consequences is the irreverent assumption that until some definite era, He who is love had no object and no exercise for that essential condition of his very being. But, apart from such assumption, the purest theism has nothing at variance with the belief that the eternal fountain of life has been salient from all eternity — that the creation is coeval with the Creator — that to impart existence to subordinate intelligence is one of the inherent attributes of God — and that the Almighty Source of such derivative minds, has ever been pleased to assign to them some local abode and some bodily integument.

As the objects of saints were formed not for themselves, but for the sentient minds to whose wants they minister; so those sentient minds were called into existence not for themselves, but for Him by whose fiat they were made. And that prolific volition, what else was it, but the will of Him who is love, that His throne should be girt about by a countless host of spirits, whom He might regard with complacency, and enrich by His beneficence?

But for complacency, that is, for the love of a moral agent, there can be no place unless that agent possesses some inherent power within the limits of which he is free. A mere machine, though the mechanism be intellectual or moral, can never be the object of approbation or of esteem to any one who is aware that it has no spontaneous movements. Compulsory action can never win for him by whom it is performed the favour or the kindly regards of any one; not even of him in whose service the agent is employed.

Man was thus created free, that he might be one of the objects of the love of his Creator. Hence it followed, as an inevitable consequence, that the Creator demanded from that free agent a return of love. To human apprehension, at least, it is an impossibility that the subject of love should not desire to be the object of love. Accordingly, the first and great commandment was, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.' And the second was like unto it. The common Father of all mankind, regarding all His children with love, could not but desire, for the sake of all, that mutual love should prevail among them. He therefore commanded each one to love his neighbour as himself.

But love which is not spontaneous, is love in name only, not in reality. It was of necessity left in the choice of man, either to render to his Maker the required tribute of affection, or to withhold it. The very purpose of his creation required that he should be free to fulfil the great commandment, or to infringe it; that he should be at liberty to do good, or to do evil—to be holy, or to be sinful. In a world created by Him who is love, in order to satisfy that immutable condition of his own being, there must therefore of necessity have been a place for the appearance of moral evil.

But moral evil, or the withholding from the Author of our being the love which He demands, must be the parent of physical evil, that is, of pain, of suffering, or of sorrow. For that which infinite love, directed by omniscience, commands, must be the highest good of him to whom the command is addressed; and disobedience to such commands must consequently be the suicidal abandonment and rejection of happiness. To prevent that suicide, or to reclaim the self-destroyer into the ways of peace, love will resort to a discipline as stern, severe, and formidable as the inveteracy of the moral disorder may require. Such love will never degenerate into fondness, nor shrink from the infliction of any remedial punishment, however protracted or acute.

As love can clothe and conceal itself in a wholesome rigour to the disobedient, so it cannot but manifest itself in an indignant jealousy to the faithless. The first injunction of the Decalogue is, that we regard Jehovah as our only God; the last is, in effect, that we do not alienate our hearts from Him to any sublunary good. The commands which intervene between these two, are all denunciations of His rivals in our hearts; that is, of idol worship, of irreverence, of irreligion, of self-will, of selfishness, of sensuality, of fraud, and of falsehood. With such rivals, He bids us know that He will endure no compromise.



But love is prompt to pardon, easily entreated, long suffering, and kind. The parental love, beneath the care of which we live, arrests the discipline, and restrains the holy jealousy which we provoke. He remembers that we are but dust, and will not always chide, nor keep His anger for ever ; but exhibits to us a mercy as high as the heavens are above the earth, and puts away our sins from us, as far as the east is from the west.

Love is indulgent, ingenious, and profuse, in the multiplication of its bounties, and especially of those bounties which have blameless delight for their only assignable object. Hence all the indefinitely varied tastes, desires, and appetites of man, and the endless resources provided for the gratification of them. Philosophy has laboured to explain what is the sublime, and what the beautiful. Theology, declining these problems, finds that the sublime and the beautiful reside in that correspondence between the mind and the objects of its perception, which the love of the Creator has established, in order to elevate the thoughts, and to gladden the hearts of His family on earth.

Love necessarily seeks an intercourse with those towards whom it is directed ; and therefore, in infinite condescension to our weakness, our Father in heaven was pleased to infuse the Divine Logos\*, his own communicative energy, into one of the children of Adam, and through him, to impart to us the loftiest thoughts and the holiest aspirations of which our humanity is susceptible. When that presence was withdrawn, and that once audible discourse became silent, the same love opened another channel of intercourse

\* If, as I have been informed, this expression, and some similar words in a following page, are susceptible of a meaning opposed to that of the creeds and articles of the Church of England, I have been most infelicitous in my choice of language. To myself my words appear nothing else than a faithful translation of those formularies on the subject of the incarnation, into terms less scholastic and more popular. But if any one finds in them more or less respecting that mysterious doctrine than he finds in the Book of Common Prayer, let him be assured that the seeming contradiction results from my unskilfulness in the use of theological phraseology, and not from the very slightest purpose of mine to dogmatise on a topic so sacred, and which to me at least is so impenetrably dark, obscure, and incomprehensible. Without the aid to be derived from the primeval traditions of the Church, it would be utterly impossible to myself (I do not believe that it would be in the power of any other man) to exhibit this or any other of the great mysteries of the Christian faith in a series of coherent, definite, and intelligible propositions. But believing the Church of England to be one of the depositories of those traditions, I gratefully accept her guidance in the darkness by which I am surrounded. I regard her creeds and her other formularies as accurate and faithful representations of divine truth ; though not, I confess, without venturing to think that they also exhibit many traces of the infirmities of the wisest, and of the faults of the best of the children of men.

with mankind; even that intercourse which the indwelling Comforter maintains with the spirit and the intellect of every true Christian, soothing his cares, animating his resolves, renewing his strength, enlarging his capacity, enlightening his path, and sanctifying his affections.

And love is ever prompt to make costly self-sacrifices. No speech or language in use among mankind can express, because no human intelligence can conceive, the true sense of that revelation which exhibits to us Him who is love, as becoming, in the person of His Son, a sacrifice for us. Alas, for the foolishness which has agitated the world in the attempt to embrace or to analyse so profound a mystery! Our debates about the incarnation and the atonement, resemble nothing more than the discussions which some one has supposed to take place among the animalculæ detected by our microscopes, about the mechanism of the celestial orbs, made known to us by our telescopes. Our real knowledge, however distorted, inflated, and magnified by our phraseology, amounts to little more than our acquaintance with the fact, that by sin, that is, withholding from our Maker and from our brethren our appointed tribute of love, man has raised an obstacle to his future happiness, for the removal of which the Divine Logos\* united himself to one of the sons of men, and in that human person, lived in humiliation, and died in agony. But a darkness, which no inquiry tends to dissipate, and which no conjecture contributes in any measure to dispel, broods over all questions respecting the nature and the reasons of that obstacle, and respecting the meaning of the hypostatic union of the Logos with our humanity, and respecting the nature of Him by whom and in whom that union is effected, and respecting the sense in which His sufferings have made a propitiation for our sins. All that is permitted to us is to adore, in silence, the awful image set before us of holiness, of woe, and of love unutterable. That God is love, is proclaimed from Bethlehem, and from Calvary, in a voice penetrating the inmost heart; but in a voice which addresses the heart only, and which summons us not to investigate, but to worship and to love.

We learn from Lord Bacon that, in the prophetic emblem which exhibits the Deity as upborne in His transit through the universe by the wings of ministering angels, the Cherubim represented the heralds of love—the Seraphim the messengers of light. In their progress through our fallen world, those celestial visitants have different enemies to combat, and different hindrances to subdue. By what clouds the light diffused by the flaming Seraphim is

\* See the note on page 645.

quenched or darkened, we have already attempted, though briefly and most imperfectly, to intimate. How the genial warmth of love, radiating from the glowing Cherubim, is chilled and arrested, we all but too familiarly know.

That divine affection is rendered ineffectual in some by the superstition which regards as poisonous the legitimate indulgence of our animal appetites, the enjoyment of our domestic affections, the pleasures of our intellectual tastes, and the delights of interrogating nature, and of resolving her enigmas. The love of God will scarcely penetrate the heart of any man who believes that God is the author of instincts created but to be thwarted, and of desires which must be either snares, if satisfied, or temptations, if debarred from their appropriate objects. Asceticism is, therefore, the enemy of that holy affection which He who is love demands of His creatures.

Neither will love to God take up her abode in the heart of him who, having learnt to consider his reasoning faculty as not merely a fallible, but a dangerous guide, has transferred to his fellow-men the responsibility of solving all the great practical problems of his life. For freedom is the indispensable aliment of love. It is of a nature too generous to live in spiritual chains and bondage. It can animate the subordinate intelligence only when entrusted by the superior power with a liberal confidence, and permitted to exercise some large measure of self-direction. The slaves of a spiritual despotism can hardly invoke a Father in heaven with filial affiancé.

To the full expansion and development of that child-like affection, it is also necessary that the conscience should retain her supremacy uninvaded by any rival power, and uncontrolled by any human dictation. If that most sensitive of all the plants which are cultivated in the garden of the soul, be grasped, and bent, and pruned by the rude hands of the stranger, it will quickly cease to vibrate to every touch, and to indicate every change in the surrounding atmosphere. It is necessary to the life of all our passions in their healthful exercise, and therefore of divine love, that we cherish our own moral sensibility, and rescue it from the narcotic influence of too close a contact with other minds. The presence of the confessor may sometimes illuminate the conscience; but in such a presence, when habitual, it will lose all those finer delicacies of perception by which every infidelity of the heart, to its source and centre, is visited with a prompt rebuke and an effective penalty.

It is essential to that allegiance of the heart, that we contemplate the object of it in the light in which He has been pleased to reveal himself to us, and in no other. If the God in our minds be not the very God of our Bibles, as revealed in the person of His Son,

and communicating with us in the person of His Spirit, He will not be the object of that supreme veneration and affiance which He demands from us. Divine love, therefore, will not readily thrive in the soul of him who worships God as He is depicted by human imagination—or as He is impersonated by an earthly vicar—or as He utters oracular responses, through that shapeless, boundless, placeless abstraction, which presumptuously usurps to itself the name of the Church—or as He is approached, like some poor earthly sovereign, by a throng of mediators and intercessors, of favourites and courtiers. From such representations of Him who challenges, as His own, the whole heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, who but must turn away, as from allusions at variance with this great law of his moral existence, and cheating him in that very field of vision in which, above every other, it concerns him to see distinctly?

And for this reason it is, that so fatal a lethargy of the heart has benumbed so large a proportion of those who have learnt from the Church of Rome to regard monastic solitude and ascetic rigours as essential to perfection; and to prostrate their minds to human judgments, and their consciences to human authority; and to render their worship to the idols of the human imagination. And therefore it is that every one who is anxious for the happiness and the improvement of mankind, is bound to '*protest*,' as our Reformers *protested*, against a system which, by thus darkening the great truth that 'God is love,' has in the same measure, defeated the great commandment of loving God supremely.

But they who make that protestation with the most profound seriousness, will not be the last to acknowledge and to lament, that the same consequences have, in no light measure, followed from some parts of the creeds, or at least from some of the mental habits, of the Churches to which they themselves belong.

For the absolute devotion of the whole spirit to God will hardly be practicable to those who, attributing an undue authority to the light to be derived from the animal instincts, follow their guidance with but little habitual watchfulness, self-restraint, or self-distrust;—nor to those who attach so much importance to the instincts of natural affection, as to be ever prompt, at their bidding, to abandon the loftier and more sublime purposes of the Christian life;—nor to those who, referring conscience to the control of feeling, sentiment, and emotion, do not usually subjugate that interior judge to the dominion of any positive and well-ascertained law; nor to those who, while casting down all other idols, are secretly erecting in their hearts shrines to the human intellect, regarding logic as the single guide to truth, even after logic itself has conducted them to



higher and to surer guides ; — nor to those who accept and regard the revealed Word of God as if life were given, not by the spirit but by the letter of it, nay, by the letter of some modern version ; — nor to those who search the Scriptures as if they were not a mine, which yields its treasures to such as faithfully and laboriously toil for them, but a mint, stored with coins fitted for immediate use, each bearing an indelible impress, and disclosing, at a glance, its exact weight, and quality, and value, and significance ; — nor to those who, having become accustomed to contemplate the one central object and omnipresent Idea of the Gospel with a gaze either indecorously familiar or coldly critical, debase that Idea by a homage erotic and irreverent, or render it unimpressive by scholastic inquiries into some imaginary plan or economy of human salvation. And for these reasons it is that a lethargy, scarcely less fatal than that of so many in the communion of the Church of Rome, has benumbed no small proportion of those who hold the purer creeds, and worship in the more apostolical forms of the Protestant Churches.

Thus, then, in each of the two great divisions of the Christian world, the perception of the great central truth that ‘ God is love,’ and the performance of the great all-embracing duty of loving Him supremely, have been obstructed by the too frequent rejection of some of those rays of light which He has bestowed on mankind, or by the inability to gather and to combine them all into one congruous whole. And yet, in neither of those provinces of the kingdom of Christ, has the obscurity or the disobedience ever been so total as would be inferred by those who listen only to their reciprocal anathemas. Imperfectly, indeed, and through many an intervening mist of prejudice and error, the convergent beams of the divine light have yet deeply penetrated many an intellect, and gladdened many a heart, and directed many a life, which either the Doctors of Rome or the Doctors of Geneva would teach us to regard as having been abandoned to a hopeless reprobation.

For, in the midst of their mutual strife, the true followers of Christ have everywhere, and at all times, learnt that ‘ God is love,’ even from the comparatively faint light of their mere animal instincts. They have gratefully observed how the conservation of our race, and of each member of it, is effected neither by pain, nor by terror, nor by any irresistible compulsion, but by the instrumentality of desires which rouse mankind to healthful pursuits, and of hopes attended by much pleasurable excitement.

From the clearer intimations of our sensitive instincts they have drawn the same lesson. They have perceived how the system of social life is carried on by means of affections which are

delightful exactly in proportion as they are benevolent, and which are enduring and intense exactly in proportion to the degree in which the objects of them are dependent upon us. Those feelings, whether conjugal, parental, fraternal, friendly, social, patriotic, or philanthropic, which impel us to exertion and reconcile us to suffering, are also the sources of our greatest enjoyments; and sluggish, indeed, must be the understanding or the heart, which can miss the inference, that He who thus constituted our nature must have willed that we should be happy.

Our intellectual instincts also bear their testimony to the Divine benevolence—a testimony which has been accepted by every genuine member of the Church in all her various divisions. For it is by means of those instincts alone, that we ever attain to truth, or to any measure of intellectual repose. Those indestructible and ultimate foundations of reasoning which are possessed by the whole family of man in common, are the invaluable patrimony of each member of that family. Without them, there could be no intercommunity of opinions amongst mankind, no enduring fellowship of mutual interests, no sure co-operation in the same general designs. They hold us all together by bonds never entirely to be broken; and, however wide may have been our deviations into error or crime, they are still the landmarks of the mind, indicating the paths by which we may return to virtue and to truth.

The light of our judicial and moral instincts lend their powerful aid in disclosing to us all, in whatever part of the ‘City of God’ our dwelling may be cast, the same consolatory view of Him in whom we have our being. If conscience lays bare the infirmities, the waywardness, and the corruption of our wills, it also proclaims that He has provided us with a continual corrective of those disorders,—that He has not left himself without a witness and a vicegerent in our hearts—that His love is exerted, not only in His parental discipline of us, but also in our own discipline of ourselves—that our Father has not left His feeble children to incur all the dangers which beset their paths, without the presence of a guardian and a monitor, by obedience to whom they may attain to an abiding tranquillity, and to a continual increase of power.

The social instincts of every disciple of Christ contribute also to assure him that he is one of the children of that gracious Being, whose mercy is over all His works. For the great safeguard of our social happiness consists in the general diffusion, by means of those instincts, of the sympathy which constrains the several members of society to unite in regarding any sentiment or action as the fit subject of commendation or of censure. On this basis rests the rightful dominion of the noblest spirits, and the willing,

though often unconscious subjection of subordinate minds. To this we owe that social economy which inflicts on crime the most effective punishment, and secures for virtue an eventual though often a tardy triumph. Nor is the hyperbole, *Vox populi vox Dei*, a mere extravagance, if it be understood only as recognising that beneficent constitution of our common nature which renders every concurrence of mankind in their moral judgments at once so terrible to guilt and so encouraging to good desert.

Neither will any peculiarity in his theological opinions exclude any true Christian from the assurance that 'God is love,' which he derives from the light of understanding. For God has placed us here in the centre of enigmas to engage our mental powers as well as of mysteries to control our natural presumption; and of all the gratifications of which we are capable, the most habitual, the most unfailing, and the least contaminated by any admixture of guilt, are those which we derive from a solution of those enigmas, and from that measure of success which attends the ardent pursuit of truth. Thus the whole interior life of every studious man is giving him continued assurance of the beneficence of his Creator, because he lives in a ceaseless succession of healthful stimulants, and of rewards which animate without satiating his curiosity.

And thus, to all who contemplate it in a devout spirit, human life presents itself as a scene which, though beset with many trials, and not much abounding in intense delights or in positive pleasures, is yet replete (to borrow the distinction of Locke) with ever-recurring *satisfactions*. Contracted as our range of choice usually is, and frequently as we are reduced to choose between paths, each of which is dangerous and painful, yet, whoever will attentively consider the nature, the varieties, and the amount of the minute occurrences which collectively compose the chronicle of his hours, his days, or his life, will be constrained to acknowledge that his instincts, animal, sensitive, intellectual, judicial, moral, and social, yield him an amount of pleasurable occupation, thought, and feeling, transcending incomparably the sum of his occupations, thoughts, and feelings, in which pain preponderates. He who judges otherwise, is usually the dupe of his own imagination, which, by placing him in positions unfamiliar, and therefore distasteful to him, induces him to ascribe to the great mass of mankind, the suffering which an exchange into their circumstances would, at first, inflict on the observer himself. But the fishermen at the Orkneys, the miner in Northumberland, the occupant of a cellar in St. Giles's, the manual labourer in the cotton factory, are all, in their various ways, quickened into grateful activity by some or other of these various instincts throughout the weariest hours of the longest day;

and all find in the success of that activity, the continually recurring *satisfaction* which the great Author of human society has designed for all the members of it.

Christians of all creeds discover, in the light of human authority, proofs of the love of Him from whom, as the fountain head, proceeds all legitimate power. Nothing was apparently more practicable than that each human being should have derived the light required for his guidance through the world directly from God himself, without the intervention of any human teacher. But man has been made the channel through which truth is disclosed to man, and the appointed instrument by which precepts of duty are impressed on him, in order that room may be provided for the development, and occasion for the exercise, of many of the happiest affections and propensities of his nature. By dividing our race into the two classes, of instructors clothed with authority, and of pupils bound to submission, God has provided for the growth, in the superior relation of fidelity, diligence, condescension, and tenderness, and, in the inferior relation of teachableness, reverence, gratitude, and humility. By thus knitting together our best affections and our highest wisdom, He has given to the Church much of the endearing character of the Family, and to the Family much of the sacred character of the Church, and has so framed the constitution, both of ecclesiastical and of domestic society, as to render each of them one of the highest and purest elements of our happiness.

These intimations of the parental character of God, are, indeed, made to all men, and not to those only to whom He has imparted the light of revelation; although to them the truth that ‘God is love,’ is disclosed in terms incomparably more distinct than any which were ever employed by Natural Religion. And it is chiefly by the light which the inspired volume throws on the condition of human nature and of human society, that we are enabled to discern in that system of things so many evidences of the divine benevolence, and of our own corresponding obligation to render our tribute of filial love to Him by whom that economy has been constructed.

And yet, whoever meditated on the character of God, and on the divine dispensations as they are made known to us in the Holy Scriptures, without the oppressive sense of a mystery beyond expression, momentous, fearful, and inscrutable? How terrific is the emphasis which the history of the Bible gives to the menaces of the Bible! Retribution is stamped on every page and line of that awful volume; and he who does not discern that impress on the sacred text, must interpret it by some canons of criticism which



would be universally rejected as altogether extravagant and wild, if applied to any other writing. Such canons are, however, in our own times, diligently employed by the learned, and eagerly welcomed by the unlearned. That mystic theory, of which Strauss is the great modern teacher, when filtered through various mediums, and purged of its coarser ingredients, is imbibed by multitudes amongst us, and is producing in their minds results not dissimilar in kind, and scarcely inferior in degree, to those which were induced by the scepticism of the eighteenth century.

The real, though often unavowed, ground of the doubts which are thus overclouding the spirits of so many of the nominal disciples of Christ, is the hopeless dejection with which they contemplate that part of the Christian scheme which is supposed to consign the vast majority of our race to a future state, in which woe inconceivable in amount, is also eternal in duration. From this doctrine the hearts of most men turn aside, not only with an instinctive horror, but with an invincible incredulity; and of those who believe that it really proceeded from the lips of Christ himself, many are sorely tempted by it either to doubt the divine authority of any of His words, or to destroy their meaning by conjectural evasions of their force.

There are, indeed, others to whom it appears irreverent and even impious to hold parley with such doubts at all. They forbid us to inquire whether the generally-received sense of our Redeemer's language on this melancholy and overwhelming theme, be really the sense in which He spoke. They resent, as mere conceit and arrogance, the opposition of the human understanding to what they consider as the unequivocal declarations of the Son of God himself; and demand that every voice which would presume to controvert those declarations should be subdued into a submissive silence. And most just is the rebuke, and most reasonable the demand, if it be indeed the fact that our Divine Teacher has really revealed to us the eternity of the punishment inflicted in a future state for the sins of men in this life. For, as the truth of God is the corner stone of all religion, so the truth of Christ is the corner stone of Christianity.

Disclaiming, therefore, the very slightest sympathy with that arrogance which would reject any part of divine revelation on the ground of its inconsistency with the dogmas of human wisdom, we would yet (in the exercise of that freedom which all Protestants, in terms at least, assert for themselves and allow to others) venture to inquire, or rather to suggest the inquiry, whether any sufficient authority really exists for asserting that either Christ himself, or His apostles, taught the doctrine of a penal retribution, which is to

be 'eternal' in the sense in which we believe the Deity himself to be 'eternal.'

With the exception of one dubious expression in the book of Daniel, the Old Testament is entirely silent on the subject of the eternity of future punishment. The same thing is true of a very large majority of the books of the New Testament. But in the 44th, the 46th, and the 48th verses of the ninth chapter of the Gospel of St. Mark, we find our Saviour speaking with the most emphatic iteration of 'their worm' which 'dieth not' and of 'the fire' which 'is not quenched;' and in the 43rd and 45th verses of the same chapter, He, with yet deeper emphasis, refers to 'the fire that never shall be quenched.' Words, doubtless, of fearful significance! — words which, however understood, can intimate nothing less than a danger, at the thought of which the stoutest heart should quake, and the holiest stand in awe! But while the reverence due to our Divine Teacher forbids us to subtract one jot or tittle from the force of His expressions, it no less distinctly forbids us to enhance their force by adding one jot or tittle to them.

Let it, then, be considered, *first*, that the words quoted from the 43rd and 45th verses ('the fire that never shall be quenched'), are rejected by some eminent critics as a spurious interpolation; and, *secondly*, that, supposing the text to be genuine, the words  $\pi\hat{\nu}\rho\ \tau\acute{o}\ \alpha\sigma\beta\epsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\nu$  mean, not 'the fire that never shall be quenched,' but 'the inextinguishable fire;' and, *thirdly*, that no one of these five verses in St. Mark's Gospel asserts, either in express terms or by any necessary implication, that the pains to which they refer will be endured throughout eternity. They assert only that the agent or instrument by means of which those pains are to be inflicted is of an immortal or an indestructible nature.

It must, however, be acknowledged that the language of Christ, in the closing verse of the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew, is perfectly clear and unambiguous, as it stands in our English Bibles. 'These,' He says, 'shall go away into *everlasting punishment*.' It therefore is of infinite moment to inquire whether the words which our translators have thus given us really correspond with the words which our Saviour himself uttered.

Now no human being knows, or ever can know, what were the very words which thus fell from the lips of Christ. They were spoken in a dialect of the Syro-Chaldaic. No one even knows with any certainty whether our extant Greek version of them proceeded from the pen of St. Matthew. On the hypothesis adopted by many high critical authorities, of an intermediate Hebrew gospel, we must believe the contrary. Assuming, however, that the hand of an in-

spired writer did trace the very words *εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον*, it will yet not necessarily follow that either of those words is a precise equivalent for the original which it represents; because, for terms so abstract, perfectly precise equivalents can seldom, if ever, be found in languages so essentially dissimilar in their structure and genius as the Syro-Chaldaic and the Greek. Let, however, the sacred text be read on the supposition, however unfounded, that our Redeemer himself actually pronounced the very terms which now stand in the Greek Testament. On that supposition can we really find in them the terrific and overwhelming sense which the popular opinion attributes to them?

It would be a mere impertinence if the writer of these pages should presume to engage in a critical discussion of the precise force and meaning of any passage in a Greek author. It would be still more extravagant, if he should lay claim to the skill requisite for analysing the sense of any Greek expressions deeply imbued in Syriac and Hebraic idioms and allusions. It is sufficient for the immediate purpose to say, in reference to the merely critical or grammatical inquiry, that the words in question are manifestly susceptible of the different meanings which so many scholars have at different times pointed out. They might, for example, be rendered with literal accuracy either by the words ‘into lifelong punishment’—or by the words ‘into perpetual abscission.’ But if the meaning of those expressions be really ambiguous or equivocal, then are we not only free, but bound, to adopt such a construction of them as may be derived from the probabilities in favour of any one or other of the possible meanings. What, then, are those probabilities?

First, then, let it be considered, that the doctrine of the eternity of the future retribution forms no *necessary* substratum of any other Christian doctrine. If it could be completely disproved, its disappearance from the Christian system would not dissolve, nor apparently impair, the strength of any other part of that mighty fabric. Every argument, every narrative, every expostulation, every warning in the Bible would be as complete and as intelligible, if not as emphatical, without it as with it. The same thing cannot be said of any other of the main truths revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Each of them is an integral part of the system to which it belongs. Is it, then, probable, that a doctrine which, if true, infinitely outweighs in importance all the rest of the articles of our creeds, should have been propounded as a mere isolated truth, standing in no necessary connection with the rest? Is it not far more probable that there is an error in that construction of our Saviour’s words, which would render Him the promulgator of it?

The angel who descended from heaven and proclaimed to the shepherds the incarnation of the Redeemer, announced himself as the herald 'of good tidings of great joy which should be to all people.' But if it be indeed true, that He who was thus made incarnate, proclaimed an eternity of unutterable woe to the vast majority of those who, from generation to generation, throng our streets, our marts, and our churches, how shall we reconcile the angelic announcement with this awful proclamation? The Gospel is, indeed, intelligence of blessedness, surpassing imagination, to 'the *few* who are chosen;' but that same Gospel is, on the popular hypothesis, not less intelligence of wretchedness, surpassing imagination, to 'the *many* who are called.' Is not, therefore, the accuracy of that hypothesis involved in much improbability?

The Bible teaches us that Christ came into the world to bruise the serpent's head, to destroy the works of the devil, and to establish the kingdom of God; and Christ himself declared that 'He saw Satan like lightning fall from Heaven.' Is it reasonable to accept any construction of the other words of Christ, which would seem to ascribe to the Spirit of Evil an eternal triumph over the Spirit of Good, in the persons of the vast majority of the race whom He lived and died to redeem?

In our present life, trouble, pain, and sorrow are, indeed, thickly sown. But they exist among us as anomalies, not as laws,—as the medicinal and remedial provisions which the Creative wisdom has infused into this economy of things, not as the ultimate end contemplated by that wisdom. In this world 'nothing terminates on evil;' although, in this world, evil so unhappily abounds. Do not, therefore, all the analogies of the Divine government raise a strong presumption against that interpretation of our Saviour's discourse, which represents Him as foretelling a future economy of things, in which evil, not remedial but penal, not transient but eternal, is to be the doom of the vast majority of the children of Adam?

Throughout the Holy Scriptures a constant appeal is made to those moral sentiments which God has himself implanted in our nature. Our heavenly Father has graciously condescended everywhere to point out to us the sacred harmony between His law as revealed by prophets and evangelists, and His law as written by himself on our hearts; and from that harmony we are taught to draw the best and highest proof of the inspiration of those sacred writings. Deeply conscious with what profound reverence it behoves us to apply that test of truth to any opinion deduced by the Church at large from Holy Scripture, we may yet venture to inquire whether it could be successfully applied in the case under consideration? If the words ascribed to our Saviour are not inexorably



bound down to the construction they usually receive, by the absolutely inflexible force of the text and of the context, is it not most reasonable to adopt some other construction, to which our own natural sense of justice and equity can respond as clearly as it responds to all the rest of the inspired canon?

So inveterate is the corruption of the human heart, that in the judgment of some, the infliction and announcement of no penalty less than that of eternal misery would be sufficient to turn it aside from present sinfulness. But does the dread of that terrific penalty really stem the headlong current of iniquity? Is it really productive of any corresponding alarm? Does it produce an alarm equal to that which would have been excited by the announcement of a penalty of infinitely less amount, but definite and intelligible? Does the world — does the Church — do her ministers — do her saints — really believe this part of the language of our Redeemer in that sense in which they familiarly interpret it? Is any human mind so constituted as to bear the incumbent weight of so fearful a probability of an evil so utterly beyond the reach of exaggeration? Is the texture of any human body vigorous enough to sustain the throes of so agonising an anticipation? What means the whole course and system of life which is passing hourly before our eyes, and through which we are ourselves passing? Why have our preachers time to engage in study, to harmonise the periods of their sermons, to give heed to our wretched ecclesiastical disputes, to devote one superfluous instant to food, to repose, or to occupy themselves with any other thing than the proclamation of the horrors of the approaching calamity, and the explanation of the only way of escape from it? Let any honest man fairly propose to himself, and fairly answer the question, whether the unutterable disparity between his actual interest in all the frivolities of life, and his professed belief in an eternity of woe, impending probably over himself, but certainly over the vast majority of the human race, does not convict him of professing to believe more than he actually believes? And, if so, is there not some reason to doubt whether he has not erred in attributing to his Saviour a meaning, for which, after all, he cannot find any real place in his own mind, or any vital influence on his own heart?

Nothing can be more remote from the design with which these pages are written than to suggest a doubt whether penal retribution in the future state does really await ‘the many who are called,’ but who throng ‘the broad way which leadeth to destruction.’ Neither does the writer of these pages presume to intimate that either the nature or the continuance of that penalty are such as to be fitly contemplated by any soul of man without the most profound awe

and the most lively alarm. To propagate or to entertain such opinions would be to question the truth of Him who is emphatically himself 'The Truth.' The questions proposed for inquiry are—whether He, or any one of His inspired Apostles, has really affirmed, in express words, that the retribution shall be endured eternally by those on whom it shall fall?—whether all the words employed by Him, or by them, on the subject are not satisfied by understanding that the punishment is eternal only inasmuch as it involves the ultimate destruction, or annihilation, of those on whom it is to be inflicted?—whether the sense usually ascribed to this part of Holy Scripture is congruous with the spirit of the rest of the revealed will of God?—whether it is not really derived from ecclesiastical traditions, rather than from any sound and unbiassed criticism?—and whether our own translators have not been induced, by those traditions, to enhance the real force of our Saviour's words by a forced and exaggerated version of them.

These suggestions or surmises are, however, opposed to the commonly-received opinion of, perhaps, all the Christian Churches. The most learned could not, therefore, offer them, except with the most extreme diffidence. By one who can make no claim whatever to learning, properly so called, either as a theologian or as a linguist, they are proposed with the deepest possible consciousness of his liability to error. He knows how weighty is the presumption in favour of the construction which the Church of Christ has, in all ages, given to words which, however understood, are the most terrific which have ever been spoken in the ears of man. And if, indeed, that construction truly represents the real meaning of those fearful words, what remains for him who revolves the prospect they open to that great human family of which he is a member, except to repose the aching heart on those declarations, so copious, so unequivocal, so interwoven with the whole scheme, structure, and system of our faith, which concur in assuring us that "God is love," and which will still encourage or rather constrain us to hope even against hope, that no rational being throughout His vast universe shall ever be so entirely exiled from His fatherly presence, as to be unable to turn to Him with penitence, or as to be beyond the reach of that mercy of which we are so often assured that it 'endureth for ever.'

This digression (if such it be) from the more immediate subject of these pages, has been suggested, and may, it is hoped, be vindicated, by the consideration, that the generally-received opinion regarding the endless duration of the state of punishment, is among the most effective of all the causes which are at present inducing amongst us that virtual abandonment of Christianity,

which assigns a mythic sense to almost every part of the sacred oracles. Learnedly and wisely as that fallacy has been combated by many, their yet more serious attention might, perhaps, be advantageously given to the inquiry whether that opinion, which is to so large a number an insuperable rock of offence, might not be either retracted or qualified without any sacrifice of truth; and whether, if so, they would not contribute, by such an acknowledgment, to reclaim the deserters to the camp much more effectually than by any assault on the positions in which they have openly entrenched themselves.

Except so far as it is overcast by the portentous cloud which the doctrine of the eternity of penal retribution throws over it, the Word of God reveals the love of God with all the effulgence of a noontide sun. It makes that disclosure chiefly, of course, to such as most freely receive that Word, and as most devoutly revolve it. Yet so bright are those 'shafts of day,' that, by many a reflection, they irradiate even those to whom spiritual despotism forbids an unrestrained access to the inspired volume. For, in those pages, love is exhibited, not as an abstract quality or affection, but as a living person; and that impersonation, whether it be presented to us under the veil of a tutelary and national Deity, as in the last four books of the Pentateuch, or under the veil of Christ's humanity, as in the four Gospels, is still ever one and ever the same,—ever yearning over our fallen race with more than parental tenderness, and ever resisting our suicidal self-will with the wholesome, though reluctant, severity of a Father. And the love thus impersonated to all Christian people, is no more the object of the exclusive knowledge, or of the exclusive adoration, of any single society of Christians, than the air we breathe, the ocean we navigate, or the sunshine by which we are warmed. To shut the gates of mercy on all who will not adopt our opinions, join in our solemnities, and attach themselves to our party, is one of the most inveterate of human infirmities; because it is one of the most inveterate of human habits, to avert the eye from some of the many rays of light by which it is the good purpose of God that we should illuminate our minds and guide our steps. To throw open those gates as widely as Love desires, and as Truth allows, is, on the other hand, the delight of those by whom all those confluent rays are received, and welcomed, and harmonised.

There is, therefore, a catholic Belief and a catholic Morality, broad and comprehensive enough to form the eternal basis of a catholic Church and of a true Christian Unity. That Belief is, that 'God is light,' and that 'God is love.' That Morality is, that we love him supremely, and each other as ourselves. That Church

is composed of all who, in the strength of this belief, are habitually striving to practise this morality. That Unity is effected not by any external conformities, but by the same interior spirit and hidden life manifesting itself, in the members of all Christian communities, by acts of devotion, of humility, of self-sacrifice, of temperance, of justice, of truth, and of peace.

Holding these opinions, we have presumed, in the preceding pages, to record the acts, and to celebrate the virtues, of some of the saints both of Rome, and of our native land. Our Hagiology is drawn from many distant, and, as some may think, from many incongruous, sources. We have ventured to extol the heroic daring of Hildebrand, and the tender enthusiasm of Francis of Assisi. We have dared to applaud the energies, at once so passionate and so calm, so widely diffused and yet so concentrated, of Loyola and his first associates. We have celebrated cordially, however faintly, the fervent zeal of Martin Luther, steeped in every human affection, even when most instinct with a diviner influence. We have rendered homage to the piety which sustained the intellectual prowess of Mabillon and his companions; and have deeply felt our incompetency to render any meet tribute to the memories of the wise and holy men of Port-Royal and of her illustrious daughters. Passing to our own land — our glorious land — and, above all other things, glorious in the parentage of the mighty transatlantic nation to which God has so largely committed the future destinies of mankind, — we have attempted to depict Richard Baxter, dwelling on the confines of the temporal and of the eternal states, and performing miracles of industry and of devotedness, over the truth of which no scepticism can cast a shade of doubt; and Whitfield and his disciples, labouring to evangelise the world with an energy almost as rare as miracle, and with a faith in themselves, in their cause, and in their Divine Leader, which no scepticism could ever cloud, and which no disappointment could ever weaken. And then, contracting our vision within a narrower, a more familiar, and, in truth, a domestic circle, we have hazarded the exhibition of a series of portraitures drawn from the life, and which, until they shall be superseded by some more skilful hand, may serve as sketches of a society, to which England and the world at large owe no common debt of gratitude. But since, in that society, no such benefactor of mankind could be found, who did not worship within the pale of our national Church, we have ventured to draw, from his own books, a conjectural likeness of a Nonconformist, whom that society would have received as a brother, if his times had fallen in their generation.

To our own apprehension, at least, there is, in these attempts at



ecclesiastical biography, a certain unity of design, because all the subjects of it held that Belief, practised that Morality, and were members of that Church which, in the sense already explained, we regard as catholic. They all believed that 'God is light,' and reverently sought that divine illumination. They all believed that 'God is love,' and devoutly surrendered their highest affections to Him. They all loved their brethren of mankind as the common children of their Father in heaven. They have all deserved, and some few of them have found, an infinitely nobler memorial among men than it is permitted to the author of these pages to raise to any man. Yet he will not think that these pages have been written in vain, if they shall stimulate any one gifted with the requisite abilities and learning, to give to the Christian world a Protestant Hagiology, celebrating the Saints of that universal Church, which embraces within its ample fold every faithful servant of Christ, whatever may be the peculiarities of his ecclesiastical system, or of his theological creed.

THE END.

LONDON  
PRINTED BY SPOTTISWOODE AND CO.,  
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